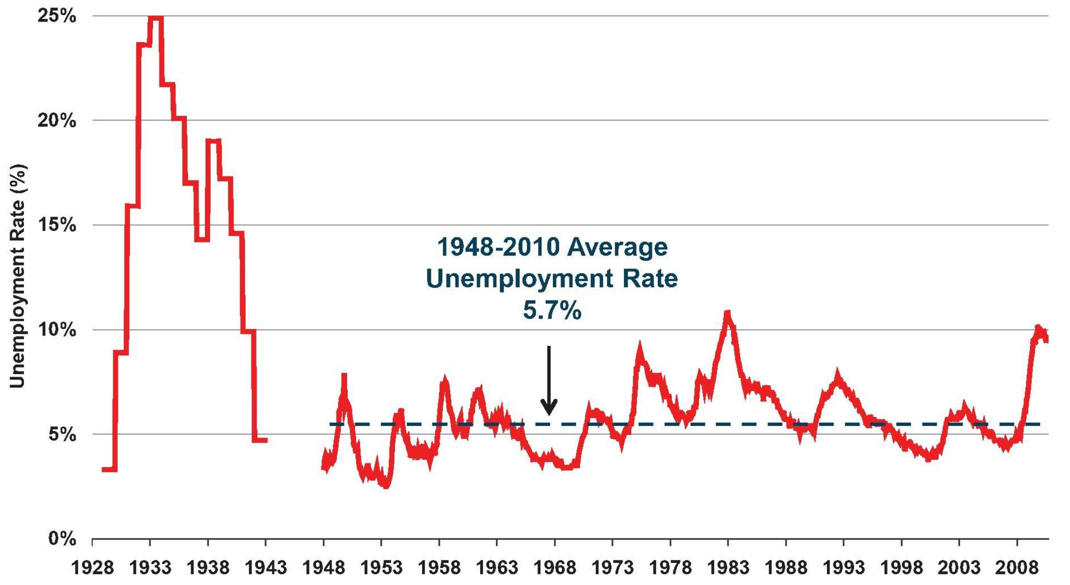
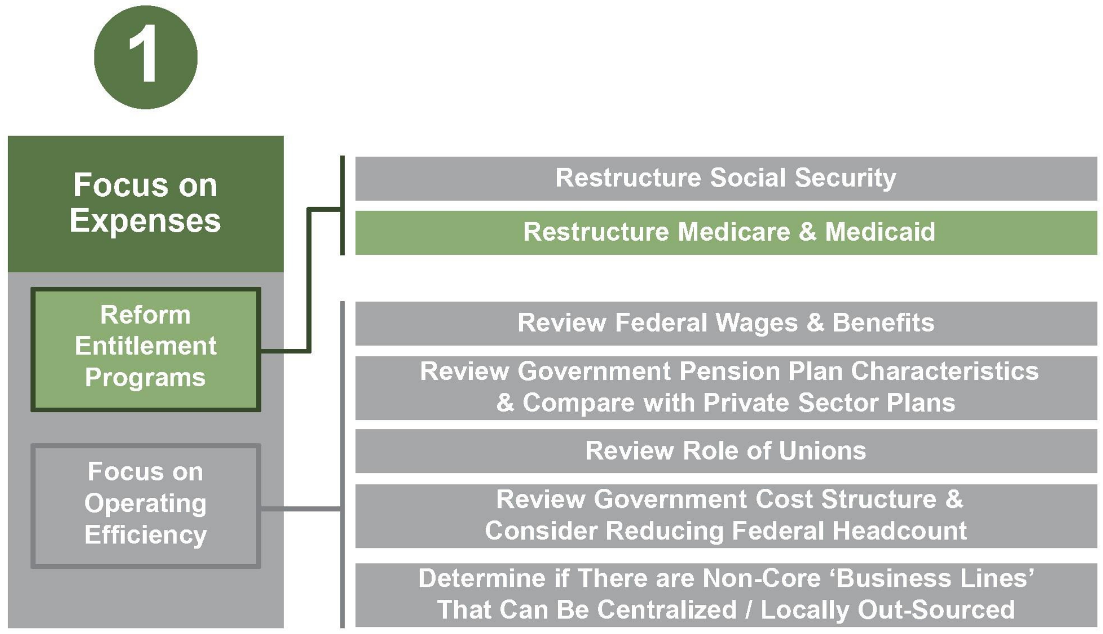
Restructure Social Security: Especially High Unemployment Levels Also Create Challenge to Reducing Benefits

USA Unemployment Rate, 1928 – 2010 YTD



Source: BLS, 2010 data as of 8/10.



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Focus on Expenses

- Reform Entitlement Programs
  - Restructure Social Security
  - Restructure Medicare & Medicaid
- Focus on Operating Efficiency
  - Review Federal Wages & Benefits
  - Review Government Pension Plan Characteristics & Compare with Private Sector Plans
  - Review Role of Unions
  - Review Government Cost Structure & Consider Reducing Federal Headcount
  - Determine if There are Non-Core ‘Business Lines’ That Can Be Centralized / Locally Out-Sourced

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Observations About America's Healthcare System

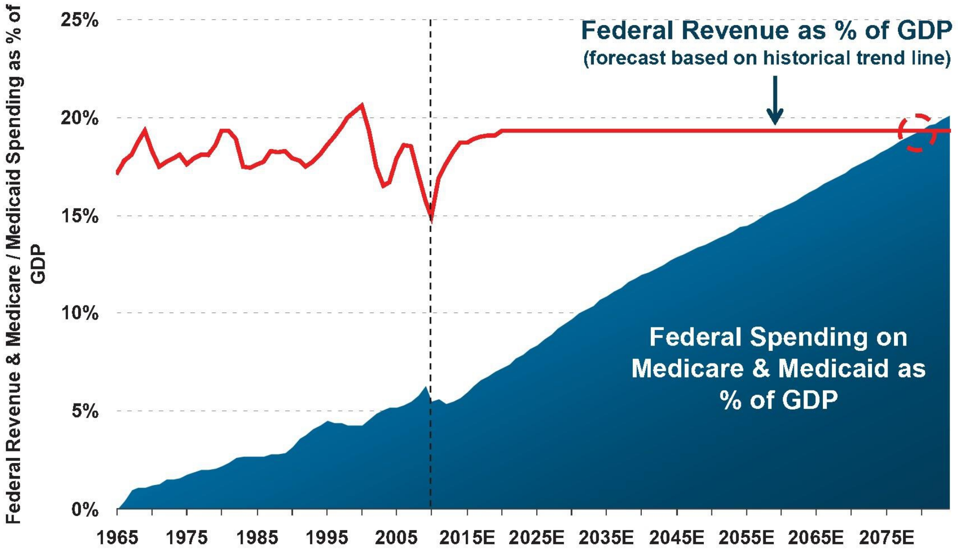
1) **High Expenses** – however measured, the costs are high: a) total dollars; b) share of GDP relative to other countries; c) cost relative to ability to pay (government, business, or individual), and

2) **Inefficiencies** – both the data and the insights of doctors, nurses, patients, and healthcare professionals identify opportunities for more efficient communication, data sharing and cost saving.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Mathematical Challenge Related to Government Healthcare Programs Facing USA Inc. per CBO Forecasts

Medicare & Medicaid Have Been Crowding Out Spending for Other Federal Programs and are Projected to Exceed All Federal Revenue by 2080E

Federal Revenue & Medicare / Medicaid Spending as % of GDP, 1965 – 2080E



Source: CBO Long-Term Budget Outlook alternative fiscal scenario, 6/10.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Variables in Restructuring Medicare & Medicaid to Reduce Material Impact on USA Inc.'s Expenses

Mathematical Illustrations* **Slide 273–274**

1) Medicare benefits – reduce them by 53% (or cap them)? ***or***

2) Medicare tax rate – increase it by 4 percentage points?

Policy Options Slide 275–328

1) Combination of mathematical illustrations – reduce benefits ***and/or*** increase taxes? ***and/or***

2) Isolate and address the drivers of medical cost inflation? ***and***

3) Improve efficiency / productivity of healthcare system? ***and***

4) Reduce services for some Medicaid beneficiaries? ***and***

5) Consider / implement CBO's 26 policy options that could reduce annual budget deficit by up to 38%?** ***and/or***

6) Consider / Implement National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform's medium- and long-term policy options***

*Note: *Each mathematical illustration would bring Medicare Part A into long-term (75-year) actuarial balance. There is no mathematical illustration for Medicaid or Medicare Part B & D as there's no 'dedicated' funding.*
***See: CBO, "Budget Options, Volume 1: Health Care," 12/2008.*
****See: National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, "Co-Chairs' Proposal," 11/10/10.*

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Mathematical Illustrations*

Mathematical Illustrations*

1) Medicare benefits – reduce / cap them?

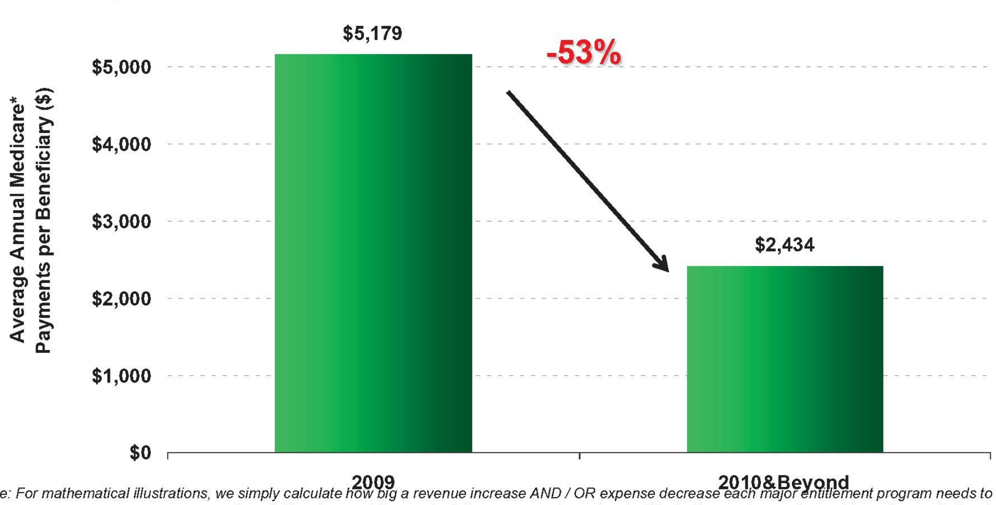
or

2) Medicare tax rate – increase it?

*Note: *For mathematical illustrations, we simply calculate how big a revenue increase AND / OR expense decrease each major entitlement program needs to reach financial break-even. These calculations are merely mechanical illustrations and are not meant to portray realistic solutions.*

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Mathematical Illustration #1 – Reduce Medicare Benefits* By 53%

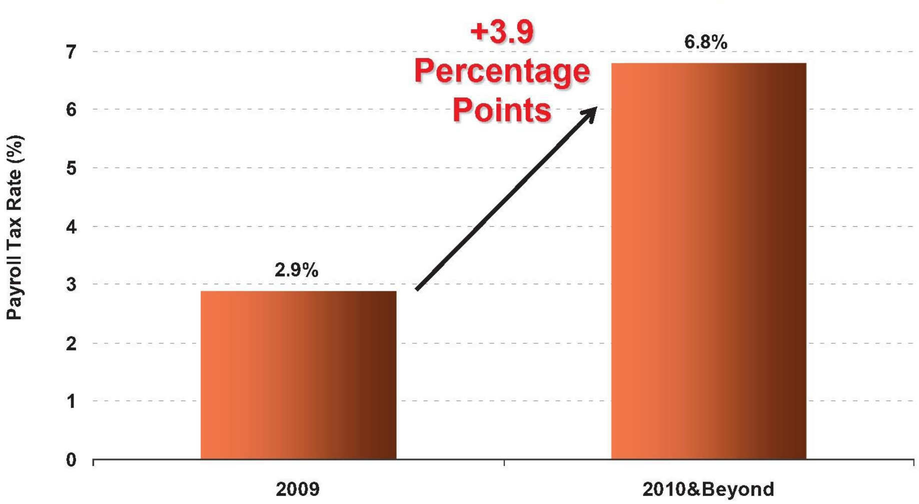
Sizing the problem:
It would take massive (53%) benefit cuts to address the shortfall of Medicare* funding



Note: For mathematical illustrations, we simply calculate how big a revenue increase AND / OR expense decrease each major entitlement program needs to reach financial break-even. These calculations are merely mechanical illustrations and are not meant to portray realistic solutions.
*Source: Dept. of Health & Human Services forecast in "2009 Annual Report of the Boards of Trustees of the Federal Hospital Insurance and Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Funds," 5/09. *Note that data presented here are limited to Medicare Part A (Hospital Insurance) Trust Fund. Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance) and Part D (Prescription Drug Benefits) are primarily funded via insurance premiums and general tax revenue transfers. Note also that data presented here are estimates prior to PPACA (2009 healthcare reform).*

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Mathematical Illustration #2 – Increase Medicare Tax Rate From 2.9% to 6.8%

Sizing the problem:
It would take massive (3.9 percentage points) payroll tax hikes on individual and businesses to address the Medicare* funding shortfall



Note: For mathematical illustrations, we simply calculate how big a revenue increase AND / OR expense decrease each major entitlement program needs to reach financial break-even. These calculations are merely mechanical illustrations and are not meant to portray realistic solutions.
*Source: Dept. of Health & Human Services forecast in "2009 Annual Report of the Boards of Trustees of the Federal Hospital Insurance and Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Funds," 5/09. *Note that data presented here are limited to Medicare Part A (Hospital Insurance) Trust Fund. Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance) and Part D (Prescription Drug Benefits) are primarily funded via insurance premiums and general tax revenue transfers. Note also that data presented here are estimates prior to PPACA (2009 healthcare reform).*

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Policy Options

Policy Options

1) Combination of mathematical solutions – reduce benefits and / or increase taxes? ***and/or***

2) Isolate and address the drivers of rising healthcare costs? ***and***

3) Improve efficiency / productivity of healthcare system? ***and***

4) Reduce services for some Medicaid beneficiaries? ***and***

5) Consider / implement CBO's 26 policy options that could reduce annual budget deficit by up to 38%? ***and/or***

6) Consider / Implement National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform's medium- and long-term policy options?

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Policy Option #1

Combination of mathematical solutions – reduce benefits and/or increase taxes?

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Combination of Reducing Benefits (Including Covered Lives) & / or Raising Taxes

Consider:

1) Reduce Medicare benefits by 53%? ***and/or***

2) Increase Medicare tax rate from 2.9% to 6.8%? ***and/or***

3) Some combination of all / some the above

However you look at it, this math is draconian. A 53% cut in Medicare benefits and / or more than doubling taxes are unrealistic. The situation for Medicaid is even worse, as Medicaid has no dedicated funding source.

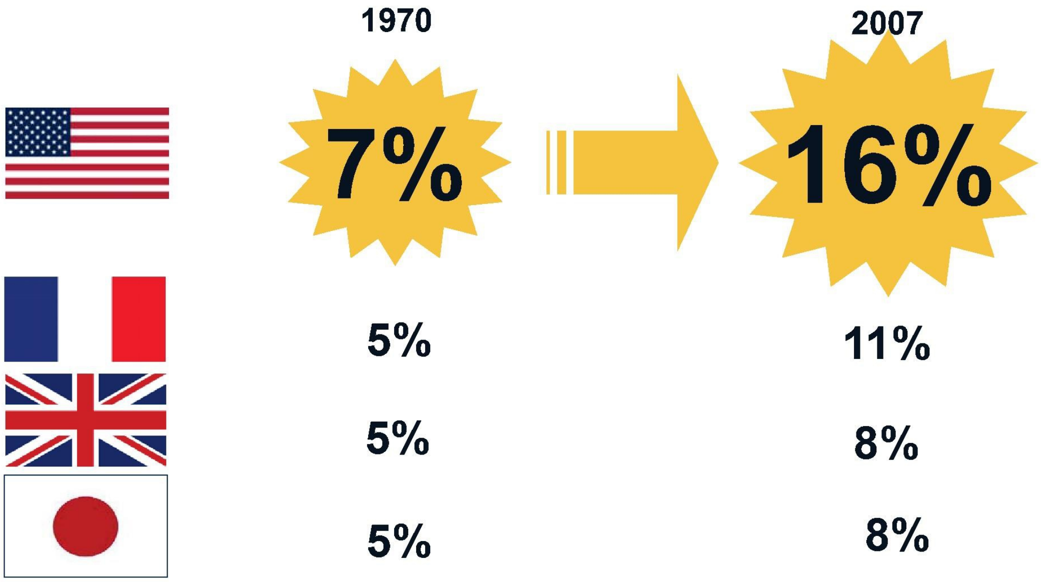
Neither Medicare nor Medicaid has yet fully faced up to the crisis and reform that Social Security experienced in the early 1980s.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Policy Option #2

Isolate and address the drivers of rising healthcare costs

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Isolate and Address the Key Drivers of Rising Healthcare Costs

USA Total Healthcare Spending Has Risen Faster than Peers' (France, UK and Japan)*



Total Healthcare Spending as % of GDP

	1970	2007
🇺🇸	7%	16%
🇫🇷	5%	11%
🇬🇧	5%	8%
🇯🇵	5%	8%

*Note: *Ranked by total healthcare spending in 2007; 1970 comparable data not available for Germany because of reunification.*
Source: OECD, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Kaiser Family Foundation.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Incentives Support Healthcare Cost Growth

- **Consumers demand healthcare services with less regard for the full economic impact as they pay only a fraction of the true cost out of pocket.**
- **Healthcare service providers are generally rewarded for pushing more services through the system, largely with relatively less regard for cost effectiveness.**

Bottom line = Powerful forces encourage spending related to social / economic / legal issues throughout the healthcare system.

Source: Doug Simpson, Morgan Stanley Healthcare Research.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Social + Economic + Legal Factors Drive Incentives to Spend

1) ***Social*** **–** Growing + aging population (with related disproportionate spending on end-of-life care) and unhealthy lifestyles.
2) ***Economic*** **–** Healthcare service providers have financial incentives to perform more services and drive revenue while consumers often have little incentive to manage incremental cost.
3) ***Legal*** **-** Rising overhead from defensive medicine (to avoid lawsuits) and from regulatory compliance costs.

Source: Morgan Stanley Healthcare Research.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Social Forces that Push Up Healthcare Spending

1) Growing and Aging Population
2) Unhealthy Lifestyles
3) Possible Solutions

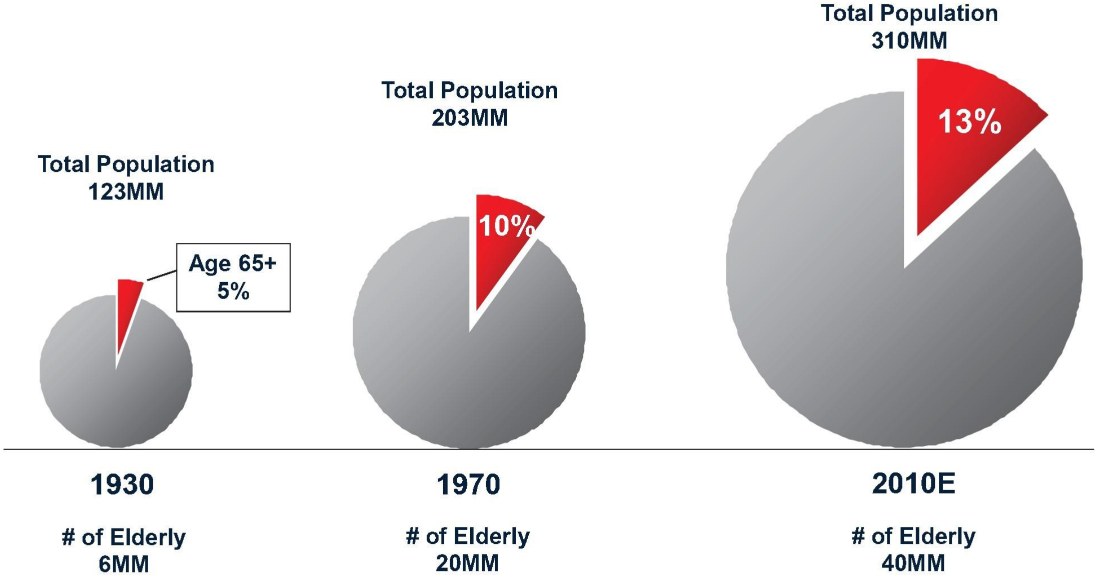
1) Growing and Aging Population

2) Unhealthy Lifestyles

3) Possible Solutions

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Social Factors—
USA is Aging…13% of Americans Over 65 Years Old, Up from 5% in 1930

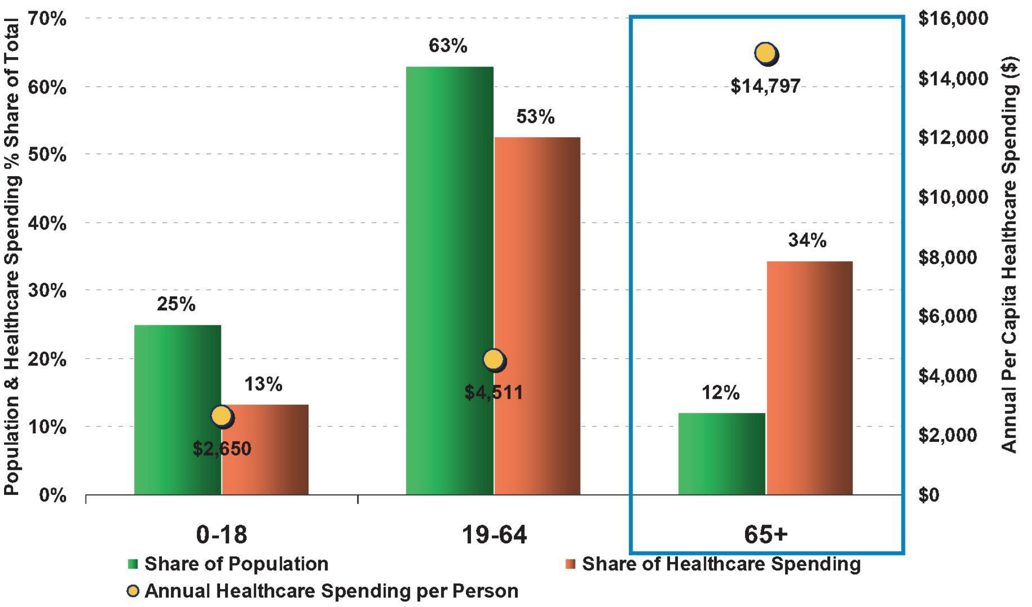
Older Population (65+) as Percent of Total Population, 1930 / 1970 / 2010E



Source: US Census Bureau.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Social Factors—
Older People Spend 2x More per Year on Healthcare than Younger Americans

Share of Population vs. Healthcare Spending by Age Group, 2004

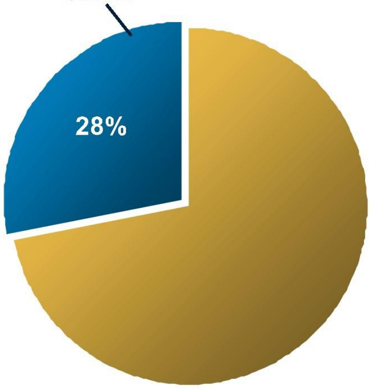


Source: Dept. of Health & Human Services, US Census Bureau.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Social Factors—
~28% of Annual Medicare Spending Geared Toward End-of-Life Care (Last 12 Months)

2008 Medicare Total Benefit Expense
$363B

Medicare Spending on Recipient's Final Year of Life
$101B



- **People 65+ spent $14,797 per year on healthcare on average in 2004, 3x what working-age people (19-64) spend.**
- It's notable that ~28% of average Medicare recipient spending occurs in the final year of life and 12% occurs in the final two months of life.

Sources: CMS, Medpac, Report to the Congress: Medicare Payment Policy, 3/10

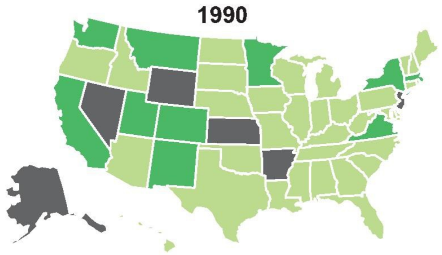
1) Growing and Aging Population

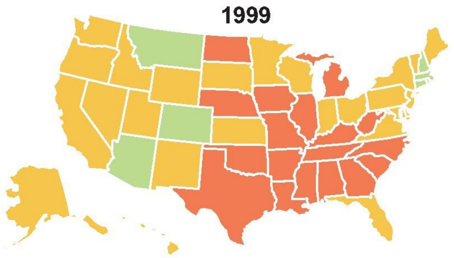
2) Unhealthy Lifestyles

3) Possible Solutions

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Social Factors— 32% of Americans Considered Obese in 2008, Up from 15% in 1990…

USA Adult Obesity Levels by State, 1990, 1999, 2008



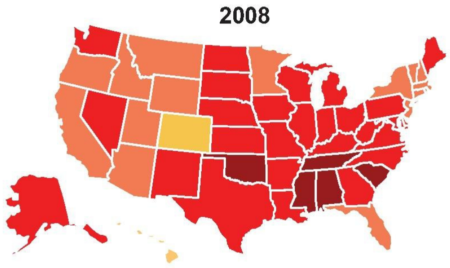


Obesity-Related Diseases

Diabetes / Cancer / Respiratory / Heart / Joint Diseases …

Obesity-Related Medical Costs

$147 billion in 2008, up 2x from 1998 to 7% of Healthcare Cost



⬛ **No Data** 🟩 **<10%** 🟩 **10%–14%** 🟨 **15%–19%** 🟧 **20%–24%** 🟥 **25%–29%** 🟥 **≥30%**

Note: An adult is considered obese if his / her Body Mass Index (BMI) is over 30. Source: Centers for Disease Control Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, "America's Health Rankings, A Call to Action for People and Their Communities, 2009 Edition".

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Social Factors— Rising Obesity Pushes Up Healthcare Cost

- **An estimated 7% of $2.1 trillion healthcare costs (including those linked to diabetes, cancer, heart / respiratory / joint diseases) were related to obesity in 2008. By comparison, that's more than all corporate income tax revenue that year.**

Note: Nearly half of all people in the U.S. with European ancestry carry a variant of the fat mass and obesity associated (FTO) gene, vs. 25% of U.S. Hispanics, 15% of African Americans and 15% of Asian Americans, per UCLA.
Source: "Annual Medical Spending Attributable To Obesity: Payer- And Service-Specific Estimates."
Eric A. Finkelstein, Justin G. Trogdon, Joel W. Cohen, and William Dietz.
Health Affairs , July 27, 2009.

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1) Growing and Aging Population

2) Unhealthy Lifestyles

3) Possible Solutions

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Social Factors—Possible Solutions Boost Healthcare Education & Incentives to Drive Better Choices

- **Emphasize on disease prevention and wellness.**
  - Education and information
  - Highlight health risk associated with certain behaviors and lifestyles
  - Financial incentives for healthy habits
  - Create social programs to champion healthy lifestyles and consumption
  - Subsidize healthy foods for lower income population
- **Discourage unhealthy behavior and consumption.**
  - Penalize poor health choices (create new incentives based upon lessons learned from higher life insurance fees for smokers and car insurance fees for speeders)
  - Consider additional / new taxes on cigarettes, non-diet sodas, etc.

Source: Morgan Stanley Healthcare Research.

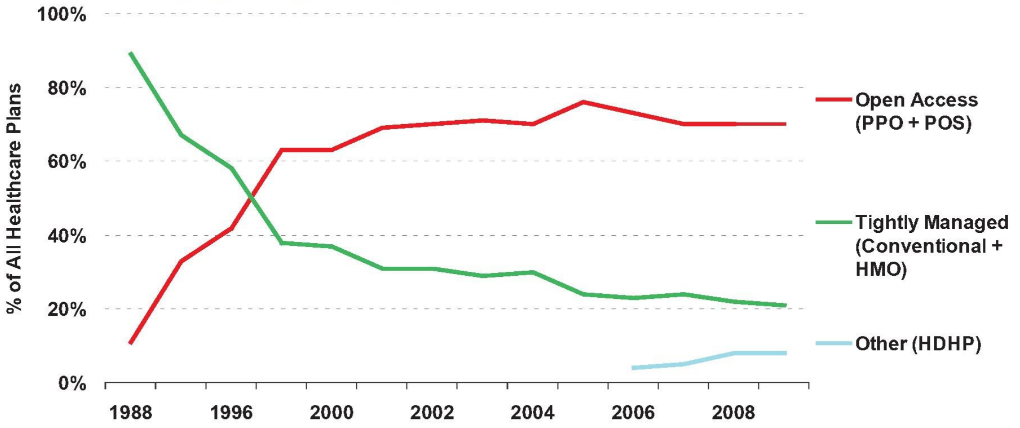
Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Economic Forces that Push Up Healthcare Spending

1) *Open access healthcare plans can increase access to care (via greater choices of care providers), but can also increase cost.*
2) *Consumers and providers are not always incentivized to constrain their healthcare costs.*
3) *Even when appropriate, poor information & lack of price transparency complicate comparison shopping for consumers.*
4) *Advances in medical technology drive demand and costs.*

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Economic Factors—Rise in Usage of "Open Access" Healthcare Plans Makes It Harder to Control Patient Choices…Subsequently, Cost of Care Increases

Societal demand for less restrictive health insurance has driven a gradual switch to open access plans. These plans offer consumers greater choices of medical providers, but at higher costs.

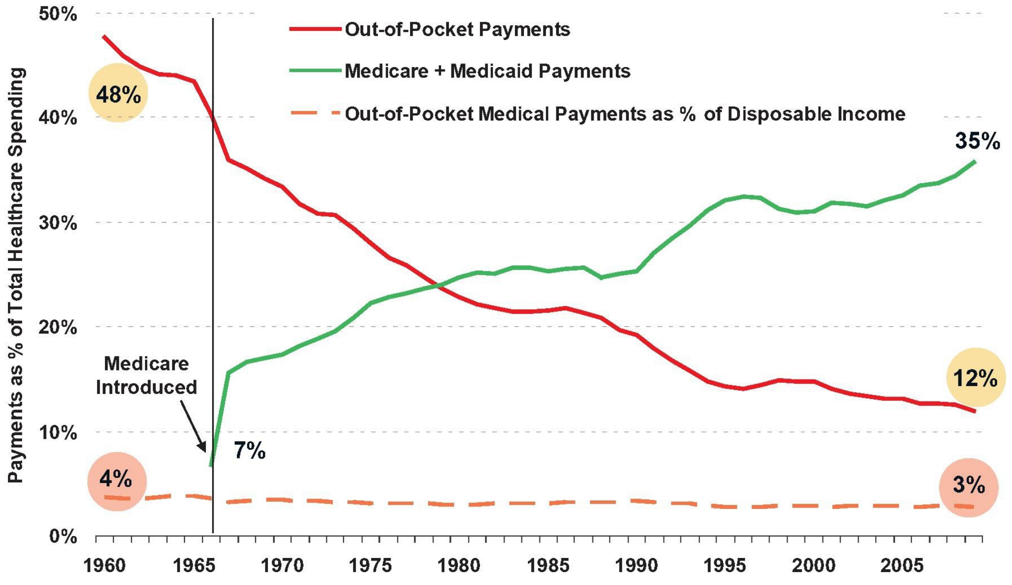
Share of Tightly Managed vs. Open Access Healthcare Plans in USA, 1988 - 2008



Note: PPO is Preferred Provider Organization, which allows enrollees to select any doctor / hospital in the insurance provider's network without going through a primary care physician. HMO is Health Maintenance Organization, which requires enrollees to coordinate all healthcare via a primary care physician (a family doctor). POS is Point Of Service, which combines the features of an HMO and a PPO. HDHP is High-Deductible Health Plan, a form of catastrophic coverage with lower premiums and higher deductibles than a traditional plan. Source: Kaiser/HRET Survey of Employer-Sponsored Health Benefits, 1999-2009; KPMG Survey of Employer-Sponsored Health Benefits, 1993, 1996; The Health Insurance Association of America (HIAA), 1988

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Economic Factors—Less Incentive for Consumers or Providers to Control Costs When Someone Else (Government / Taxpayers) Pays the Bills

Out-of-Pocket Spending Accounted for Just 12% of Healthcare Spending in 2009, Down from 48% in 1960



Source: Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Economic Factors – Employer and Government Funding System Separates Consumers from True Costs of Healthcare

- **When one doesn't pay directly and gets an expensive good / service for free (or well below cost), one tends to consume more – it's basic supply and demand economics.**
- **Count up the subsidies:**
  - **Medicaid:** 47 million (24MM children / 12MM low-income adults / 7MM disabled / 4MM elderly) Americans (15% of population) each received $6,872 in taxpayer funds, on average, for healthcare in 2008 through Medicaid. That $6,872 equals ~19% of annual per-capita income for Americans.
  - **Medicare:** 45 million elderly Americans (15% of population) averaged $7,991 per person for healthcare in 2008 ($4,875 for hospital care; $3,116 for medical insurance and prescription drugs). That equals ~23% of annual per capita income.
  - **Private Market:** 157mm Americans with private health coverage (subsidized by employers) in 2008 paid just 16% of the total premium cost themselves for single coverage and 27% for family coverage. In effect, that represented tax-free "earnings" of $3,951 for singles or $9,256 for families (not including the tax savings on their personal premium contributions).

Source: Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

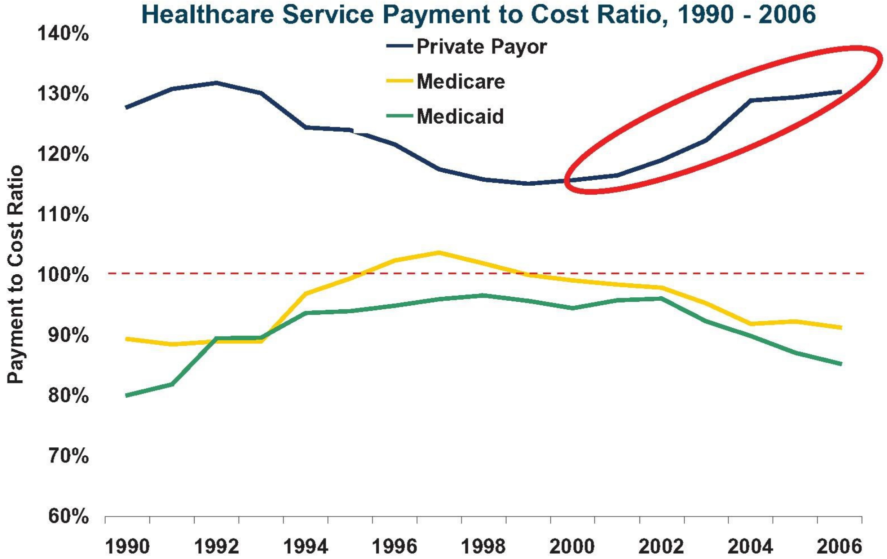
Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Economic Factors— Healthcare Providers Are Rewarded for Driving Revenue

- **While striving to provide the best care possible, healthcare providers tend to have financial / legal / societal incentives to provide more care, all else equal.**
- Reimbursement for providers is generally volume-based (e.g., more procedures generate more revenue for care providers), though there are efforts to increasingly focus on quality.
- Unlike car buyers, for example, who often disregard a dealer's maxed-out model and choose only the features that are important to them and what they can afford, healthcare buyers tend to buy all the "features" as: 1) buyers (patients in this case) are typically not medical experts, so they defer to doctors / care providers for decisions; and 2) buyers only bear a small portion of the costs as someone else (employer or government) is paying for the features.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Economic Factors—
Rising Healthcare Costs Disproportionately Borne by Employers and Individuals

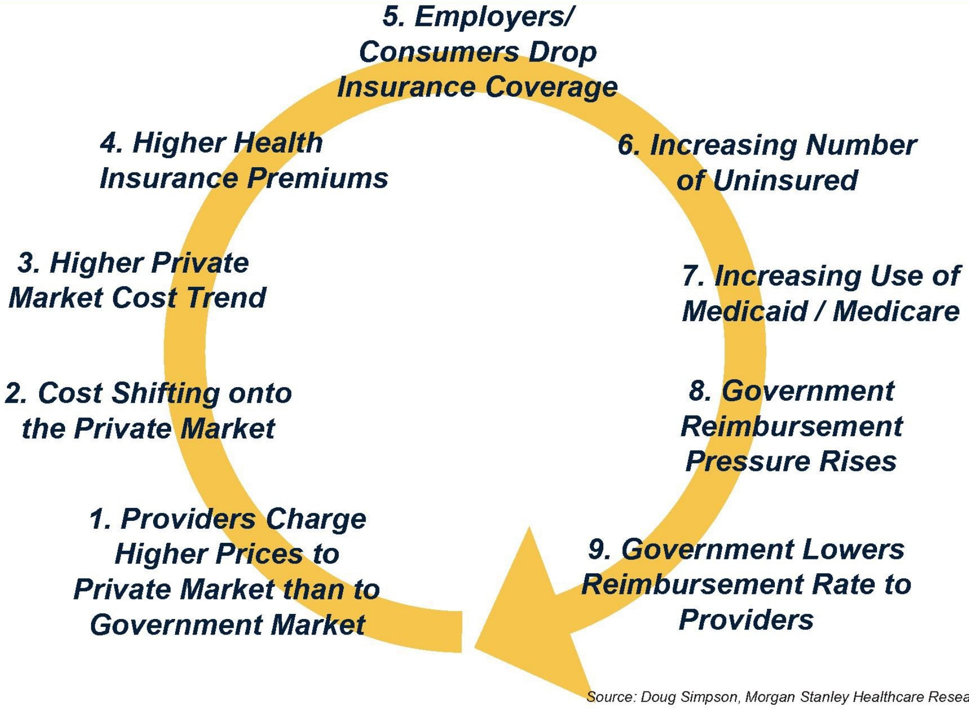
Over the last few decades, private payors (employer-sponsored health insurance plans) have consistently paid more than government payors (Medicare / Medicaid) and have, in effect, subsidized government reimbursement.

Healthcare Service Payment to Cost Ratio, 1990 - 2006



Source: Avalere Health Analysis of American Hospital Association Annual Survey data, 2006, for community hospitals.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Differential Payment Rates Can Create a Negative Cycle Leading to Erosion of Private Healthcare Coverage and Higher Entitlement Spending



5. Employers/ Consumers Drop Insurance Coverage

6. Increasing Number of Uninsured

7. Increasing Use of Medicaid / Medicare

8. Government Reimbursement Pressure Rises

9. Government Lowers Reimbursement Rate to Providers

1. Providers Charge Higher Prices to Private Market than to Government Market

2. Cost Shifting onto the Private Market

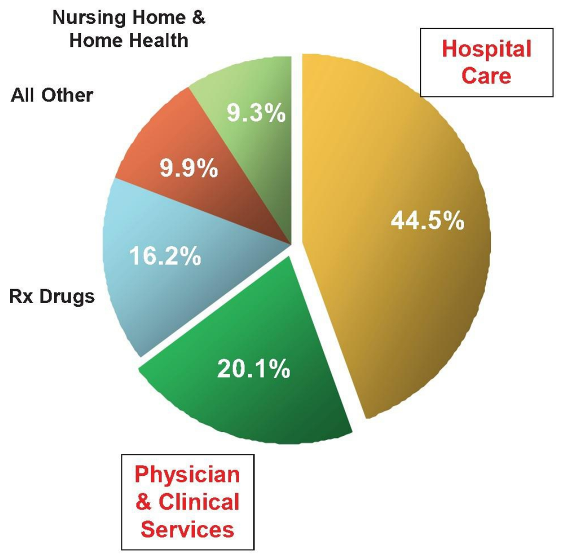
3. Higher Private Market Cost Trend

4. Higher Health Insurance Premiums

Source: Doug Simpson, Morgan Stanley Healthcare Research.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Economic Factors— Reimbursement Reform Is Easier Said than Done Owing to Political Sensitivity…

Percentage Contribution to Medicare Medical Cost Growth Rate by Spending Type, 2019E



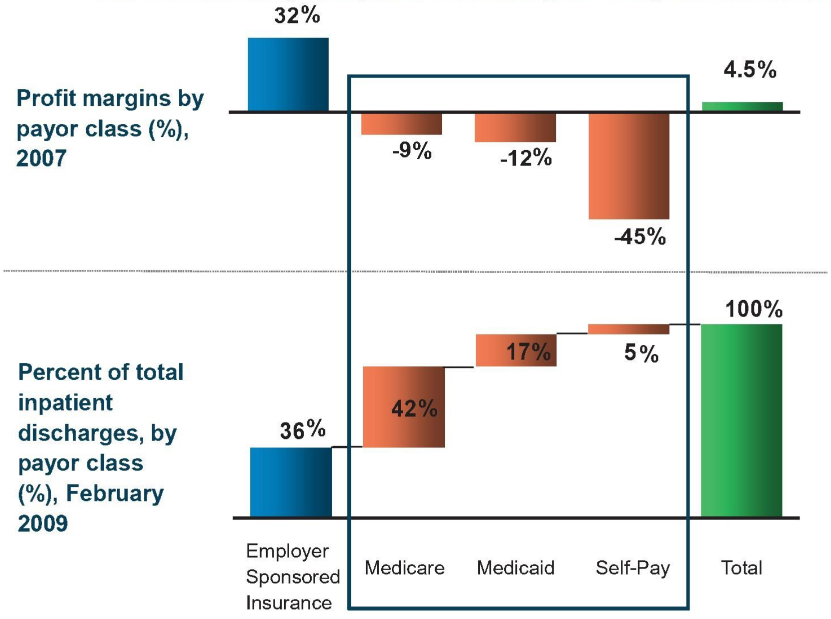
Key Issues:

- Consumers understandably do not like constraints on their care location.
- Doctors, nurses and hospitals are fulfilling a difficult task at the core of the healthcare delivery system.
- Care providers are very important to local communities.
- Local hospitals are large employers.
- Many hospitals are struggling financially.

Source: Data per CMS' National Health Expenditure database, Doug Simpson, Morgan Stanley Healthcare Research.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Economic Factors— Healthcare Service Providers are Already "Underpaid" by Government

USA Community Hospital Profit Margins & Inpatient Discharges by Payor Class



Profit margins from patients with employer sponsored insurance are sufficient to leave hospital industry with positive overall margin, despite being only 36% of inpatient discharges.

Reimbursement cuts to Medicare and/or Medicaid would pose significant challenges, as hospitals already realize negative margins from those payor classes.

Source: Avalere Health analysis of American Hospital Association Annual Survey data, 2007, for community hospitals. Morgan Stanley Healthcare Research.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Economic Factors— Poor Information & Lack of Price Transparency Make it Harder for Consumers to “Comparison Shop”

Patients are at a healthcare information disadvantage in two respects[1]:

- **Lack of transparency:**
  - It’s **harder for consumers to compare prices** of healthcare services from different healthcare providers than in other consumer markets given the complexity of healthcare market.
  - With employer- / government-subsidized insurance, many patients are **‘locked in’ with their insurance plans** that do not incentivize “shopping around.”
- **Knowledge gap:**
  - Unlike other markets where consumers tend to use their own information and preferences, consumers **depend more on the advice and guidance of physicians** or other healthcare suppliers.
  - Unlike other “merchandise,” **healthcare is literally of life-and-death importance to consumers, making risk aversion – and price insensitivity – higher**. This price insensitivity is exacerbated because the consumer, in effect, gets it at a discounted price anyway.

Source: 1) Accounting for the cost of US healthcare, McKinsey Global Institute

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Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Economic Factors— Consumers Increasingly Demand Expensive Treatment and Are Able to Pay for it With Government Subsidies

Total High-End Surgeries up 50x from 1970-2004, Driven by Medical Advancements + Consumer Ability to Spend Assisted by Government Payments

	# of Patients (Aged 50+) Undergoing Advanced Procedures in USA		**Typical Costs per Procedure ($)**
	1970	**2004**	
Coronary Procedures			
Angioplasty / Stent Implantation	<20,000	1.1 million	$12,000
Pacemaker / ICD[1]	<10,000	350,000	$15-34,000
Bypass	<10,000	220,000	$28,000
Dialysis Procedures	<10,000	480,000	$24-72,000 per year
Joint Replacement Procedures			
Hip	<20,000	390,000	$12,500
Knee	--	440,000	$12,500

Note: 1) ICD is Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator, which is similar to a pacemaker but for a heart rhythm that beats too fast. Cost of procedure approximated by Medicare reimbursement.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Economic Factors—Unconstrained Access to Medical Technology Increases Cost of Care…

- **Researchers generally agree that advances in medical technology have contributed to rising US Health Spending[1]**
- Medical technology affects the costs of care through several "mechanisms of action"[2]
  - **New treatments** for previously untreatable terminal conditions
  - Major advances in clinical **ability to treat previously untreatable acute conditions**
  - **New procedures** for discovering and treating secondary diseases
  - **New indications** for a treatment over time
  - Ongoing, **incremental improvements** in existing capabilities
  - **Major advances** or the cumulative effect of incremental gains extending clinical practice to conditions once regarded beyond its boundaries
- **Very expensive, high-end medical procedures (such as dialysis and heart bypass) – which can easily cost as much as the average annual income of an American – are increasingly 60-70% subsidized by taxpayer dollars.**

Source: 1) "How Changes in Medical Technology Affect Healthcare Costs," Kaiser Family Foundation, March 2007; 2) Richard A. Retting, "Medical Innovation Duels Cost Containment," Health Affairs (Summer 1994).

Opportunity for Two Mutually Reinforcing Cycles: **Information** + Incentives…

- More widespread adoption of healthcare information technology, in particular clinical decision support software, should yield better information and provider decisions.
  - Healthcare is at the cusp of leveraging decision-support technology after historically lagging other industries.
  - Opportunity to develop best practices to improve patient care and outcomes and reduce medical errors and costs.
  - More evidence-based care could help to narrow the variation in practice norms
  - The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 provided approximately $19 billion for Medicare and Medicaid Health IT incentives.
- Medpac summarizes the opportunities and issues succinctly.
  - "Drivers of investment in IT include the promise of quality and efficiency gains. Barriers include the cost and complexity of IT implementation, which often necessitates significant work process and cultural changes. Certain characteristics of the health care market—including payment policies that reward volume rather than quality, and a fragmented delivery system—can also pose barriers to IT adoption."

Source: Morgan Stanley Healthcare Research.

…Opportunity for Two Mutually Reinforcing Cycles: Information + **Incentives**

- Improving incentives for providers and consumers is also critical.
  - Providers need appropriate incentives to improve quality of care and lower costs.
  - Drivers include more widespread adoption of bundled payments and accountable care organizations.
  - Tort reform could play an important role.
  - Consumers need to take more responsibility for their own health and to utilize the healthcare system appropriately.
  - Appropriate social and financial incentives are key.

Source: Morgan Stanley Healthcare Research.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Economic Factors–Possible Solutions

1) *Cost-Sharing and/or*
2) *Reimbursement Reform and/or*
3) *Improving Cost & Quality Transparency and/or*
4) *Deploy Cost-Benefit Analysis for Medical Technology Spending*

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Economic Factors–Possible Solutions
1) Cost-Sharing

- **Cost-sharing can help control demand for a portion of healthcare by creating incentives for consumers to shop for most cost-effective treatments (although those benefits would be somewhat mitigated by the skew in health spending toward high users).**
- Once again, a Math Problem: Consider a routine physician office visit in which a provider suggests and / or patient requests various tests, procedures, etc.
  - Patient #1 covered by a plan with a $20 co-pay (i.e., a flat fee regardless of the level or intensity of care performed during the visit)
  - Patient #2 covered by a plan with a 10% co-insurance for in-network care (i.e., responsible for 10% of the aggregate billed charges)
  - Clearly, patient #2 will become more sensitive to necessity and cost of care beyond a level of $200 of total healthcare services
  - Note that deductibles drive similar dynamic as a co-pay: once the deductible is met, the member has little or no “skin in the game”
- Only 14-18% of employer-sponsored health insurance plans use pro-rata cost sharing (i.e. co-insurance in example #2 above). Most (77%) insurance plans only use a co-pay (in example #1), which gives consumers little incentive to shop the most cost-effective treatment path.

Source: Kaiser/HRET Survey of Employer-Sponsored Health Benefits, 2009

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Economic Factors–Possible Solutions
2) Reimbursement Reform

Reimbursement reform could help shift drivers of payment from quantity of care to quality of care. The following list provides a few options to consider.

- Bundled Payments: Providers get a fixed budget to treat an episode of care (i.e. a broken hip). Exceeding the budget means providers absorb additional costs; staying under it lets provider benefit from savings.
  - Examples: PROMETHEUS Payment System[1], Medicare Acute Care Episode Demonstration[2]
- Global payment system[3] (i.e., capitation): Providers are paid up-front to provide care that their patient receives over a period, incentivizing them to manage costs and quality. This global payment is adjusted periodically to reward accessible and high-quality care.
- Pay for performance[4]: Reimbursement for care providers varies, based on various quality and efficiency measures such as discharge rate and readmission rate.
- Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs): Provider groups accept responsibility for the cost and quality of care for a specific population of patients[5]
  - The recently enacted *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* includes regulations supporting the creation of Accountable Care Organizations
  - Other models often discussed to improve coordination / efficiency and reduce costs : 1) integrated delivery systems; 2) multispecialty group practices; 3) physician-hospital organizations; 4) independent practice associations; 5) virtual physician organizations

Source: 1) Cutting Healthcare Costs by Putting Doctors on a Budget, Time 1) Adopted in Rockford, IL in Jan 2010 2) Medicare Demonstration Project Overviews, www.cms.gov/demoprojects 3) Recommendations of the Special Commission on the Healthcare Payment, Commonwealth of Massachusetts 4) Pay for Performance Incentive Programs in Healthcare , Geoffrey Baker 5) How the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation Should Test Accountable Care Organizations, Stephen Shortell, Lawrence P. Casalino and Elliott S. Fisher for Health Affairs, July 2010

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Economic Factors–Possible Solutions
3) Improving Cost & Quality Transparency

- **Improving cost and quality transparency of healthcare services could help doctors and patients make more informed decisions for each situation.**
- **Though enhancing competition and price transparency in healthcare is not easy,[1] new models for encouraging "comparison shopping" are emerging:**
  - Castlight Health, a start-up financed by venture capitalists and the Cleveland Clinic, is working to build a search engine for healthcare prices[2]
  - Other services beginning to publish price information: Thomson Reuters, Change: healthcare, and health insurers (e.g., the Aetna Navigator)[2]
- **A 2007 study by Deloitte proposes a "Price Transparency Checklist for States":**
  - provide prices for services that matter to consumers
  - make it easy to understand
  - keep care providers, insurance & pharmaceutical companies engaged and informed
  - provide price and quality measures
  - keep expanding price transparency initiatives
  - maintain methodological rigor
  - promote access and use of price information
  - evaluate impact and ROI

Source: 1) The Market for Medical Care: Why You Don't Know the Price; Why You Don't Know about Quality; And What Can Be Done About It, by Devon M. Herrick and John C. Goodman, March 12, 2007; 2) "Bringing Comparison Shopping to the Doctor's Office," The New York Times, June 10, 2010; 3) Healthcare Price Transparency: A Strategic Perspective for State Government Leaders, by Deloitte Center for Health Solutions, 2007

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Economic Factors–Possible Solutions
4) Deploy Cost-Benefit Analysis for Medical Technology Spending

- **Deploying cost-benefit analysis for medical technology spending can help ensure we are spending resources wisely.**
- **Directly measuring the impact of new technology on total healthcare spending – and its true value – is very difficult[1]**
- The Kaiser Foundation outlines some of the more common policy suggestions for dealing with this driver of costs:
  - Cost-effectiveness analysis (i.e., comparative effectiveness)
  - Rationing (unlikely to be adopted owing to political sensitivity), regulation, budget-driven constraints (used by other countries but generally not popular in the U.S.)
  - Market-based rationing (consumer-driven healthcare, pay-for-performance, information technology)

Source: 1) "How Changes in Medical Technology Affect Healthcare Costs," Kaiser Family Foundation, March 2007.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Legal Forces that Push Up Healthcare Spending

1) Defensive Medicine

2) Possible Solutions

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Legal Factors— "Defensive Medicine" Drives up Healthcare Spending

- **Defensive Medicine consists of procedures or tests that a doctor orders to avoid possible future malpractice lawsuits.**
- **The practice is prevalent among US physicians and is contributing factor to healthcare spending. According to a survey of 824 physicians in 2005[1]:**
    - 93% said they had engaged in the practice of Defensive Medicine
    - 59% said they often ordered more diagnostic tests than medically necessary
    - 52% said they referred patients to other specialists in unnecessary circumstances
    - 33% said they often prescribed more medications than medically necessary

Source: 1) David Studdert, et al., American Medical Association, "Defensive Medicine Among High-Risk Specialist Physicians in a Volatile Malpractice Environment," 6/2005.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Legal Factors—Possible Solution
Tort Reform Could Reduce Incentives of Defensive Medicine

Ways to control costs from tort litigation without jeopardizing patient health

The CBO listed a package of tort reform proposals (10/09):

- Cap of $250,000 on awards for noneconomic damages for malpractice
- Cap on awards for punitive damages of $500,000 or twice the award for economic damages, whichever is greater
- Modification of the “collateral source” rule to allow evidence of income from such sources as health and life insurance, workers’ compensation, and automobile insurance and subtract it from jury awards
- A statute of limitations – one year for adults and three years for children – from the date of discovery of an injury
- Replacement of joint-and-several liability with fair-share rule: Defendants would be liable only for the percentage of a final award equal to their share of responsibility

Source: Congressional Budget Office, Letter to the Honorable Orrin G. Hatch dated October 9, 2009; Congressional Budget Office, Letter to the Honorable John D. Rockefeller IV dated December 10, 2009

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Legal Factors—Possible Solution
Tort Reform Could Save USA Inc. $54 Billion Over Next 10 Years

- **CBO estimates that a package of typical tort reform proposals could reduce total US health spending by 0.5% annually:**
  - Direct savings: Roughly 0.2% of this reduction stems from lower national premiums for medical malpractice insurance.
  - Indirect savings: Another 0.3% stems from slightly lower utilization of services related to defensive medicine.
- **Over 10 years, CBO estimated tort reform could reduce net healthcare spending by $54 billion:**
  - Spending for Medicare, Medicaid, Children’s Health Insurance Program, and Federal Employees Health Benefits could fall ~$41 billion over the next decade (with the greatest savings in Medicare).
  - Federal tax revenues could rise by ~$13 billion as lower health insurance costs for employers could lead to higher take-home pay for employees and therefore higher income taxes for USA Inc.

Source: Congressional Budget Office, Letter to the Honorable Orrin G. Hatch dated October 9, 2009; Congressional Budget Office, Letter to the Honorable John D. Rockefeller IV dated December 10, 2009

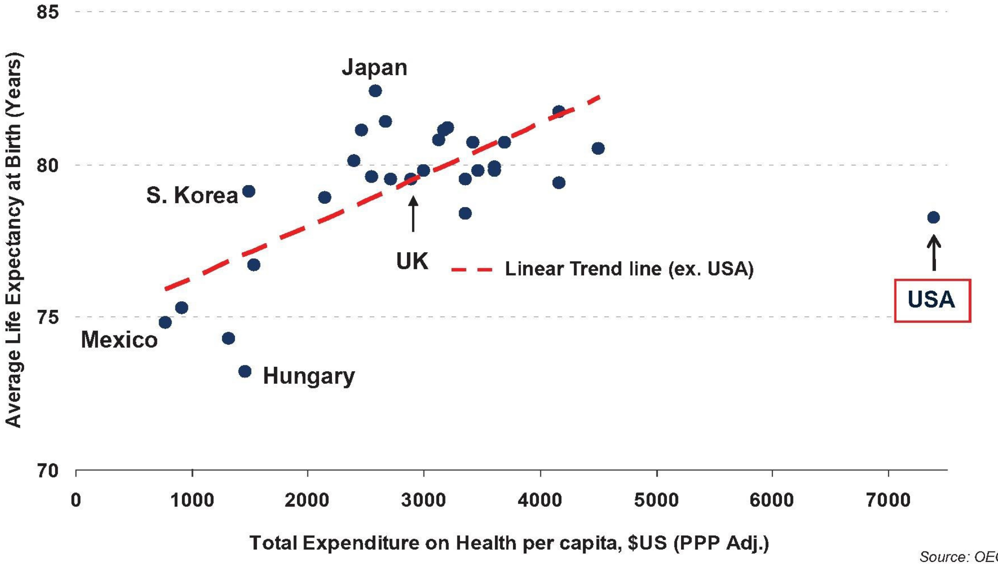
Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Policy Option #3

Improve Efficiency / Productivity of Healthcare System

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Most Businesses are Performance-Based, Many Components of Healthcare System are Not

USA Healthcare Outcome (based on Life Expectancy) Have Room For Improvement Relative to Other Countries

Healthcare Spending per capita vs. Average Life Expectancy Among OECD Countries, 2007



Source: OECD.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: In Addition to Life Expectancy, USA Falls Behind OECD Averages in Many Other Health Indicators

2007 Health Indicators	**USA**	**OECD Median**	**USA Ranking (1 = Best, 30 = Worst) RED = Below Average**
Obesity (% of total population)	**34**	**15**	30
Infant Mortality (per 1,000 live births)	**7**	**4**	27
Medical Resources Available (per 1,000 population)			
Total Hospital Beds	**3**	**6**	25
Practicing Physicians	**2**	**3**	22
Doctors' Consultations per Year	**4**	**6**	19
MRI Machines* (per million population)	**26**	**9**	1
Cause of Death (per 100,000 population)			
Heart Attack	**216**	**178**	22
Respiratory Diseases	**60**	**45**	21
Diabetes	**20**	**12**	20
Cancer	**158**	**159**	14
Stroke	**33**	**45**	8

*Note: *MRI is Magnetic Resonance Imaging. Source: OECD.*

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Effectiveness Research Could Improve Efficiency (i.e., Outputs Track Inputs)

- **Comparative Effectiveness** evaluates different options for treating a condition for a specific set of patients[1]
  - Either relative benefits and risks of various treatment options (technology assessment, evidence-based medicine), or
  - Both clinical effectiveness and relative cost (cost-benefit analysis).
- Without rigorous data about comparative effectiveness, according to the CBO:
  - Treatment decisions often depend on anecdotal evidence, conjecture, and the experience/judgment of involved physicians.
  - Treatments and types of care vary widely from one area of the country to another.
- To affect healthcare spending meaningfully, comparative effectiveness must alter doctor and patient behavior, potentially through reimbursement scheme changes, the CBO notes.
- Note that by law, Medicare is effectively precluded from considering costs when making coverage decisions.

Source: "Research on the Comparative Effectiveness of Medical Treatments", A CBO Paper, December 2007.

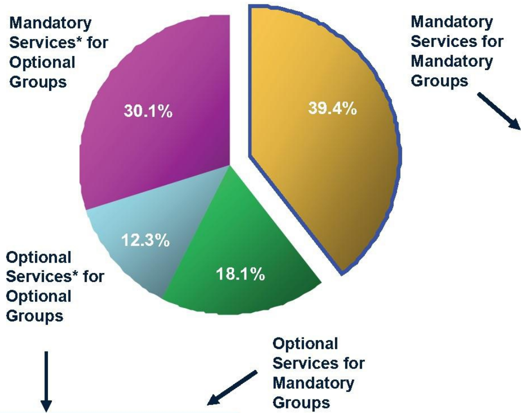
Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Policy Option #4

Reducing Optional Services + Optional Beneficiary Groups[1] Could Save Up to ~60% of Annual Medicaid Cost, per Kaiser Family Foundation

Note: 1) Medicaid is a jointly financed federal and state program that provides health and long-term care services to 55 million low-income Americans. As a condition of participating in Medicaid, states are required to cover certain "mandatory" populations and to provide a specified set of benefits. States also have discretion to cover additional low-income individuals in each of these categories ("optional groups") and receive federal matching payments. Optional eligibility categories include children and parents, persons with disabilities and the elderly above mandatory coverage limits; persons residing in nursing facilities; and the medically needy. Source: Kaiser Family Foundation, 2005

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Policy Option # 4 – Reducing Optional Services + Beneficiary Groups[1] Could Save Up to 60% of Annual Medicaid Spending

Medicaid Expenditures by Eligibility Group and Type of Service, 2001



Eliminating *optional groups* could save ~42% of total Medicaid spending

Federal-required mandatory services / groups = ~40% total spending

Eliminating *optional services* could save ~30% of total Medicaid spending

Note: 1) Medicaid is a jointly financed federal and state program that provides health and long-term care services to 55 million low-income Americans. As a condition of participating in Medicaid, states are required to cover certain "mandatory" populations and to provide a specified set of benefits. States also have discretion to cover additional low-income individuals in each of these categories ("optional groups") and receive federal matching payments. Optional eligibility categories include children and parents, persons with disabilities and the elderly above mandatory coverage limits; persons residing in nursing facilities; and the medically needy. Source: Kaiser Family Foundation, 2005

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Examples of Medicaid's **Mandatory** Beneficiaries & Services

Examples of Mandatory Beneficiaries

- Children under age 6 with family annual income below $20,841
- Children age 6 or older with family annual income below $15,670
- Pregnant women with annual income below $12,382
- Elderly and disabled with annual income between below $6,768 (for an individual)

Examples of Mandatory Services

- Physician services
- Laboratory & x-ray services
- Inpatient hospital services
- Outpatient hospital services
- Rural health clinic services
- Certified pediatric and family nurse practitioner services
- Early & periodic screening, diagnostic, and treatment (EPSDT) services for individuals under 21

Note: Supplementary Security Income and Federal Poverty Levels are 2005 levels. Source: Kaiser Family Foundation, 2005.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Examples of Medicaid's **Optional** Beneficiaries & Services

Examples of Optional Beneficiaries

- Disabled and elderly with annual income between $7,082 (Supplementary Security Income, or SSI) and $9,310 (Federal Poverty Level, or FPL)
- Nursing home residents with annual income between $7,082 (SSI) and $21,000 (3x SSI)
- Pregnant women with annual income above $12,382 (>133% of FPL)
- Children under 6 with annual family income above $20,841

Examples of Optional Services

- Prescription drugs
- Dental services
- Rehabilitation and other therapies
- Prosthetic devices, eyeglasses, durable medical equipment
- Hospice services
- Inpatient psychiatric hospital services for individuals under age 21
- Other specialist medical or remedial care

Note: Supplementary Security Income and Federal Poverty Levels are 2005 levels. Source: Kaiser Family Foundation, 2005.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Policy Option #5

Consider / Implement CBO's 26 policy options that could reduce annual budget deficit by up to 38% over the next 10 years

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Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: CBO Policy Options— Regulate Private Health Insurance Market; Modify Tax Code; Modify Insurance Eligibility; Improve Efficiency

Policy Options	Gov. Future Deficit Reduction (%)[1]
Require large employers to either pay government for providing insurance or offer employees basic insurance coverage	0.7%
Replace the income tax and payroll tax exclusion with a refundable credit	8.8%
Replace the income tax exclusion for employment-based health insurance with a deduction	8.0%
Reduce the tax exclusion for employment-based health insurance and the health insurance deduction for self-employed individuals	6.6%
Raise the age of eligibility for Medicare to 67	1.2%
Convert Medicare and Medicaid "Disproportionate Share Hospital Payments" into a block grant	1.2%
Consolidate Medicare and Federal Medicaid payments for graduate medical education costs at teaching hospitals; set consolidated payment equal to:	
• Adjusted IME[3] payments using a 2.2% adjustment factor + DGME[4] and Medicaid GME[2] funding inflated by the CPI-U[5] minus 1 percentage point	0.8%
• 90% total mandatory GME[2] funding inflated by the CPI-U minus 1 percentage point	0.4%

Note: 1) As % of Cumulative Total Government Deficit from 2010 to 2019 2) Graduate Medical Education 3) Indirect Medical Education 4) Direct Graduate Medical Education 5) Consumer price index for all urban consumers Source: CBO

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: CBO's Policy Options – Reduce Medicare / Medicaid Payments; Modify Premium and Cost-Sharing in Federal Health Programs

Policy Options	Gov. Future Deficit Reduction (%)[1]
Reduce Medicare's payment rates across the board in high-spending areas	**0.7%**
Remove or reduce the floor on Federal matching rates for Medicaid services	
• **Remove the floor on the federal medical assistance percentage**	**3.3%**
• **Reduce the floor on the federal medical assistance percentage to 45%**	**1.9%**
Reduce the taxes that states are allowed to levy on Medicaid providers	**0.7%**
Increase the basic premium for Medicare Part B to 35% of the program's costs	**3.2%**
Combine changes to Medicare's cost sharing with restrictions on Medigap policies[2]	**1.1%**
Require a copayment for home health episodes covered by Medicare	**0.7%**
Restrict Medigap coverage of Medicare's cost sharing	**0.6%**
Introduce minimum out-of-pocket requirements under TRICARE for life	**0.6%**

Note: 1) As % of Total Cumulative Government Deficit from 2010 to 2019 2) Individual insurance policies designed to cover most or all of Medicare's cost-sharing requirements. Source: CBO

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: Policy Option #6

Consider / Implement National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform's medium- and long-term policy options

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: **Medium-Term** Policy Options From the Report of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform

Medium-Term Policy Options	**Deficit Reduction F2012-F2020E[1]**
Convert the federal share of Medicaid payments for long-term care into a capped allotment	$89 billion
Reform Tricare for Life[2] to increase cost sharing for Military retirees	$55
Cut federal spending on graduate and indirect medical education	$54
Reduce taxes that States may levy on Medicaid providers	$49
Expand ACOs, payment bundling, and other payment reform	$38
Accelerate phase-in of DSH payment cuts[3], Medicare Advantage cuts and home health cuts in PPACA	$37
Other[4]	$73
Total Deficit Reduction F2012-F2020E	**$395 billion**

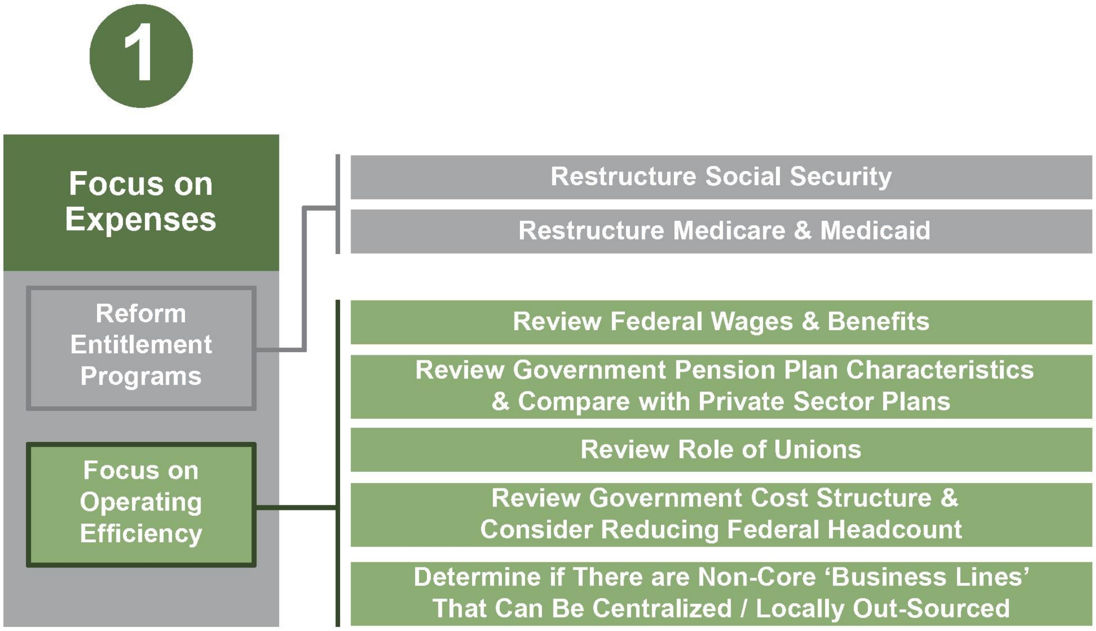
Note: 1) Cost reductions are Fiscal Commission staff estimates based on CBO and other available sources. Most numbers were generated pre-healthcare reform and may differ significantly. 2) Tricare for Life is a supplementary military health insurance designed to minimize Medicare-eligible military retirees' out-of-pocket medical expenses. 3) DSH is the Medicare and Medicaid disproportionate share hospital payments for hospitals that receive disproportionately large Medicare and Medicaid patients. 4) Other includes reduce Medicaid administrative costs, increase nominal Medicaid copays, cut Medicare payments for bad debt, increase cost sharing for federal civilian retirees and place dual-eligible individuals in Medicaid Managed Care. Source: National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, "The Moment of Truth: Report of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform," 12/1/10.

Restructure Medicare & Medicaid: **Long-Term** Policy Options From the Report of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform

- Set global target for total federal health expenditures after 2020 (Medicare, Medicaid, CHIP, exchange subsidies, employer health exclusion), and review costs every two years. Keep federal health expenditure growth to one percentage points above GDP growth.
- If costs have grown faster than targets (on average of previous 5 years), require President to submit and Congress to consider reforms to lower spending, such as:
  - Increase premiums (or further increase cost-sharing)
  - Overhaul the fee-for-service system
  - Develop a premium support system for Medicare
  - Add a robust public option and/or all-payer system in the exchange
  - Further expand authority of the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB)*

Note: IPAB is a 15-member Independent Payment Advisory Board established under PPACA with significant authority with respect to Medicare payment rates. Beginning in 2014, in any year in which the Medicare per capita growth rate exceeded a target growth rate, the IPAB would be required to recommend Medicare spending reductions. The recommendations would become law unless Congress passed an alternative proposal that achieved the same level of budgetary savings. Source: National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, "The Moment of Truth: Report of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform," 12/1/10.

Focus on Expenses–
Reform Entitlement Programs + Focus on Operating Efficiency



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Focus on Expenses

Reform Entitlement Programs

- Restructure Social Security
- Restructure Medicare & Medicaid

Focus on Operating Efficiency

- Review Federal Wages & Benefits
- Review Government Pension Plan Characteristics & Compare with Private Sector Plans
- Review Role of Unions
- Review Government Cost Structure & Consider Reducing Federal Headcount
- Determine if There are Non-Core 'Business Lines' That Can Be Centralized / Locally Out-Sourced

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Start with the Basic High-Level Math –
Review Government Cost Structure

Government (federal + state + local, including military) spending per household has steadily risen to 82% of median post-tax household income, up from 51% in 1967.

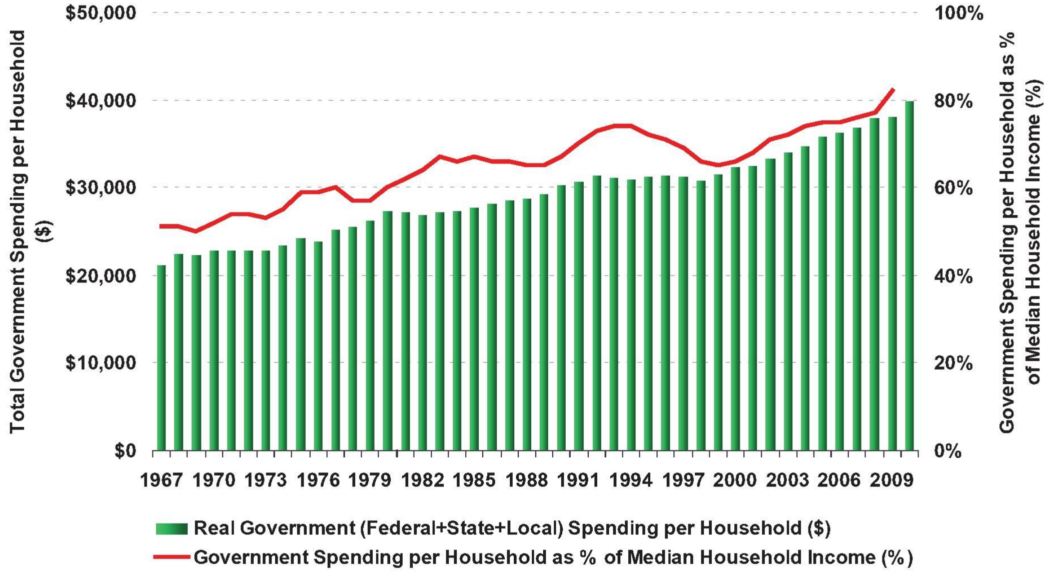
Federal spending (ex. entitlement + interest payments + one-time items) per household has remained flat since 1967, while entitlement + interest payments + one-time items spending per household rose 3x.

Including federal, GSE, state and local (excluding military) employees, there is one public worker for every six households in the country, unchanged from 1967 or 1980 levels.

*Note: *Real spending adjusted for inflation, in 2005 dollars. Source: Census Bureau, Bureau of Economic Analysis.*

Total Government (Federal + State + Local, including Military) Spending Has Risen to **82%** of Median Household Income*, Up from **51%** in 1967

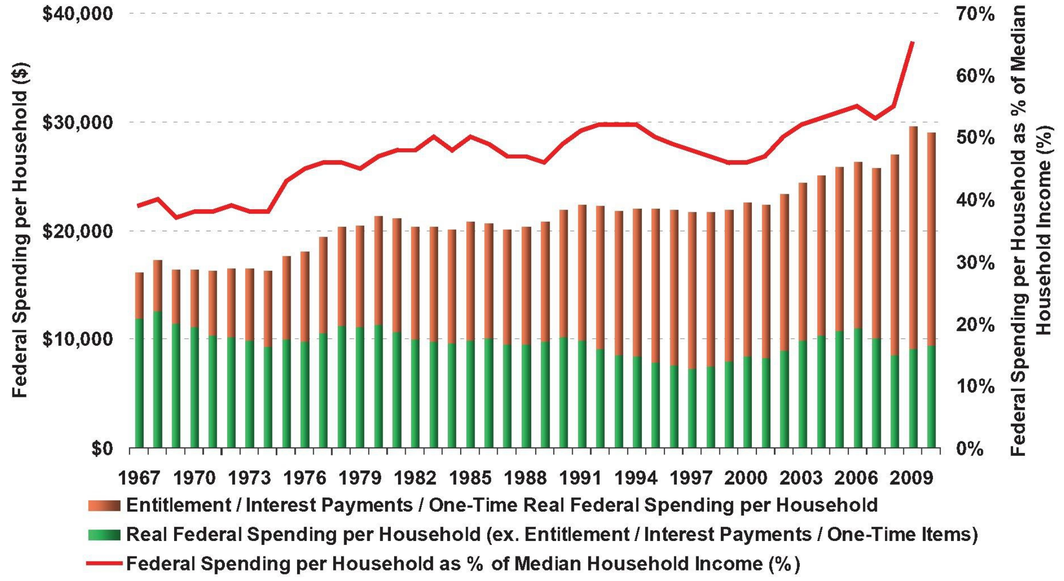
Real USA Government Spending per Household and as Percent of Post-Tax Median Annual Household Income, 1967 – 2010



*Note: *Post tax. Real spending adjusted for inflation using BEA's GDP price index, in 2005 dollars. Data source: Census Bureau, Bureau of Economic Analysis.*

Federal (Including Military) Spending Has Risen to **65%** of Median Household Income*, Up from **39%** in 1967, Driven by Entitlement Spending + Interest Payments

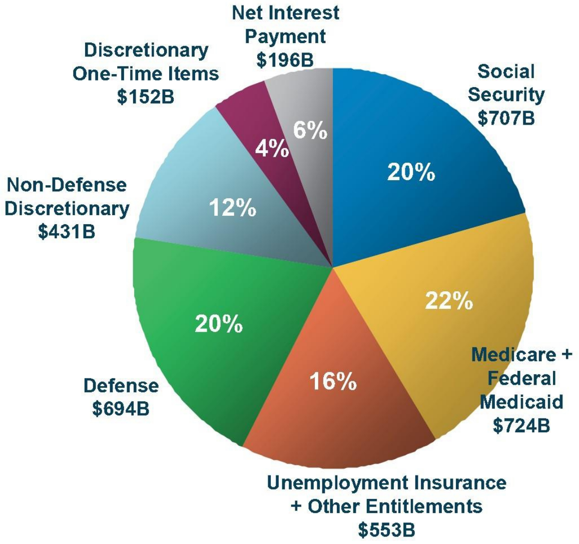
Real USA Federal Spending per Household and as Percent of Post-Tax Median Household Income, 1967 – 2010



*Note: *Post tax. Real spending adjusted for inflation, in 2005 dollars. Data source: White House Office of Management and Budget, Census Bureau, Bureau of Economic Analysis.*

Federal (Including Military) Spending Per Household = $29,043 in F2010 Federal Entitlement Spending Per Household = More Than Half ($16,670)

F2010 USA Inc. Expenses =
$3.5T



F2010 USA Inc. Expenses Per Household = $29,043

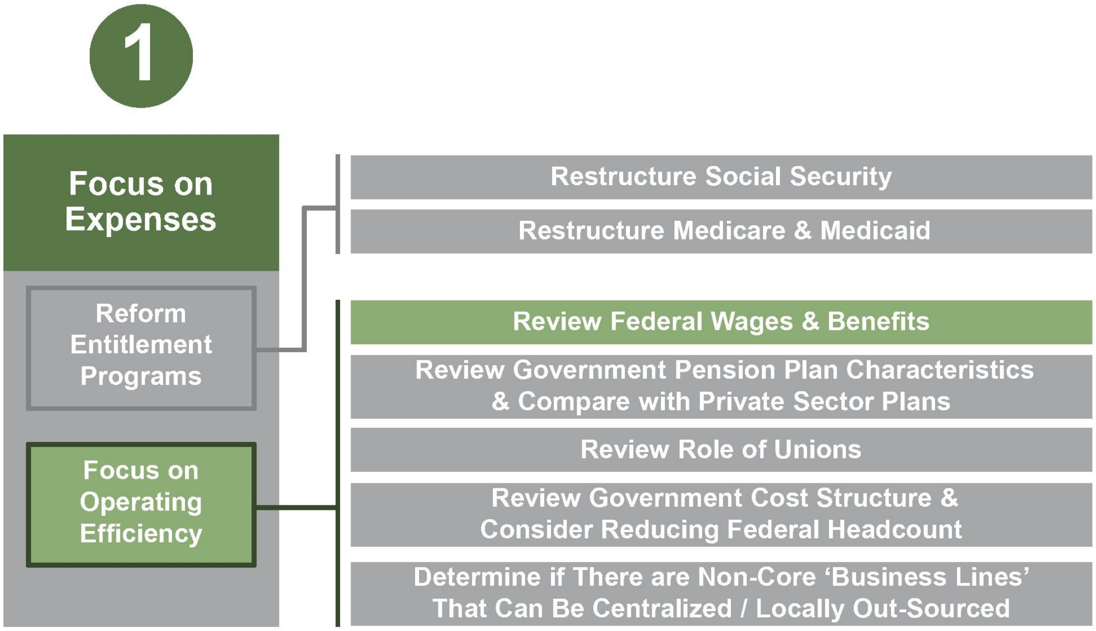
Entitlements	**$16,670**
Social Security	*$5,939*
Medicare + Federal Medicaid	*$6,087*
Unemployment Insurance + Other	*$4,644*
Defense	**$5,828**
Non-Defense Discretionary	**$3,619**
Discretionary One-Time Items	**$1,277**
Net Interest Payments	**$1,649**

Note: Non-defense discretionary spending includes infrastructure, education, law enforcement, etc. Discretionary one-time items includes TARP, ARRA, and spending on GSEs. Source: White House Office of Management and Budget, Census Bureau, Bureau of Economic Analysis.

At a High Level, With Focus on Improving Operating Efficiency, USA Inc. Might Consider Ways to Do Things Like…

- Consider empowering an independent / 3rd party auditor with expertise in government operations around the world / corporate turnarounds to conduct a broad-ranging audit of USA Inc.'s operations.
- Restore strong rules for budget process: Require annual budget resolutions and reconciliation; PAYGO* to limit spending, enforce annual appropriations process consider biennial budgeting.
- Consider giving the President 'line-item' veto / rescission authority.
- Empower commissions analogous to the military base closing panels to review and consolidate government functions and agencies, as well as aid to State and local governments.
- Seek flexibility to manage performance and terminate poor-performing Federal employees.
- Develop flexible / long-term compensation plans including bonus payments for Federal employees when annual budget deficit reduction goals are met.
- Privatize government real estate and other assets with little use, expanding on current efforts to trim $3 billion in government-owned real estate.
- Identify additional opportunities to increase public/private investment, management and operations to drive innovation and investment in infrastructure

Note: PAYGO is the practice of financing expenditures with funds that are currently available rather than borrowed.
Source: KPCB and Alvarez & Marsal Public Sector Services, LLC.



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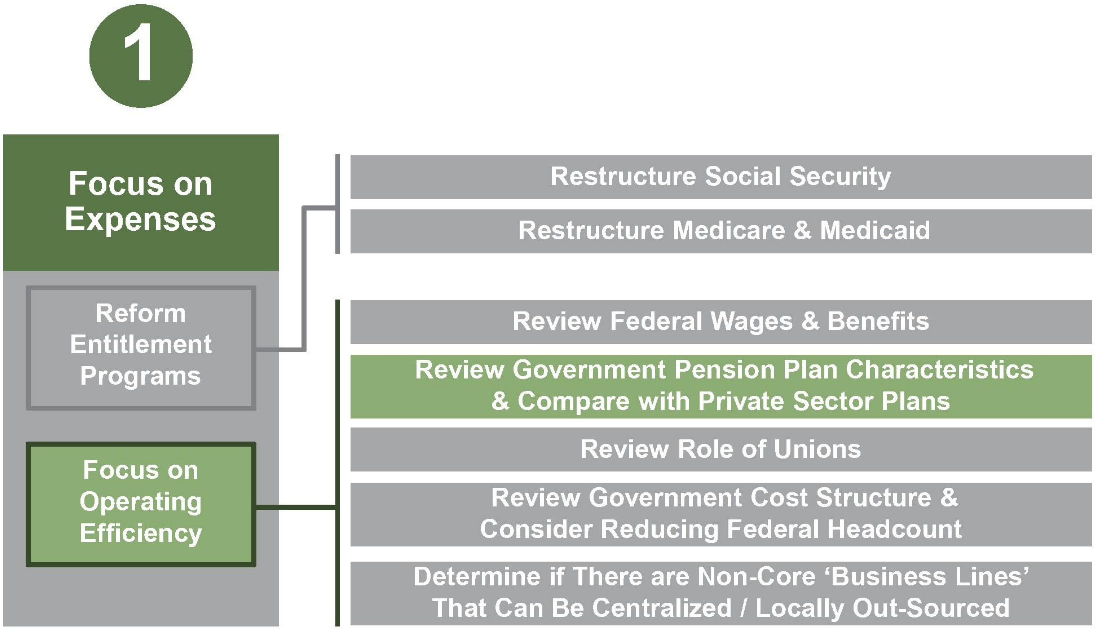
Review Wages: A Comprehensive / Independent Review of Federal Wages & Benefits System May Be Worthwhile

- **Analysis of existing data on federal wages & benefits is controversial.**
- *USA Today* and the Cato Institute examined simple averages of federal (excluding military) wages & benefits vs. private sector using Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) data and concluded that federal wages & benefits are ~100% higher than private industry – wages are 58% higher while benefits are 3x higher.[1] (March 2010, updated in August 2010)
- The White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) responded that gross average comparisons are 'unfair and untrue.' And when one holds education and age constant, federal employees earn slightly less than those in the private sector on average, although the difference is not statistically significant.[2] (March 2010)
- The Heritage Foundation, in response to OPM and OMB's comments, released a statistical analysis based on BEA data, and claimed that adjusting for variables such as age, education, marital status, race, gender, size of the metropolitan area, and several others, federal wages & benefits are 31% higher than private industry for occupations in both government and private sector.[3] (July 2010)

Source: 1) Dennis Cauchon, USA Today, "Federal Workers earning double their private counterparts," http://www.usatoday.com/money/economy/income/2010-08-10-1Afedpay10_ST_N.htm Tad DeHaven, "Federal Employees Continue to Prosper," http://www.cato-at-liberty.org/federal-employees-continue-to-prosper/; 2) John Berry, "OPM Statement on Federal Employee Pay – Recent Comparisons of Federal Pay to Private Sector are Unfair and Untrue," http://www.opm.gov/opm_federalemployeepay/ & Peter Orszag, "Salary Statistics," http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/blog/10/03/10/Salary-Statistics; 3) James Sherk, "Comparing Pay in the Federal Government and the Private Sector," http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2010/07/comparing-pay-in-the-federal-government-and-the-private-sector

Review Wages: A Turnaround Expert Would Drill Down on Compensation Differences Between Public & Private Sectors

- In the absence of reliable, generally accepted adjustment factors, USA Inc. needs a comprehensive 3rd-party review of its compensation practices.
- Most businesses constantly review their compensation practices; these reviews typically intensify when the financials of the core business erode.
- Considerations include compensation for comparable jobs, uniqueness of skill sets and education required for particular roles, productivity, hours worked, regional cost of living, job security, years of service, and financial health of the business unit.



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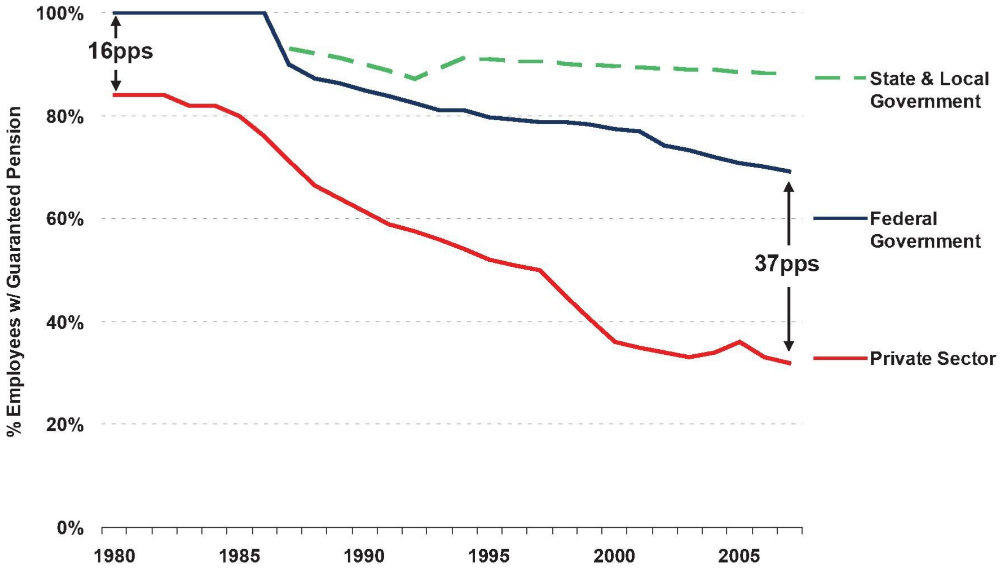
Review Pension Plans: 70% of Federal Government Employees Still Enjoy "Guaranteed" Pensions, While Such Defined-Benefit Pension Plans Are Increasingly Rare in Private Sector (now at 32% vs. 84% in 1980)

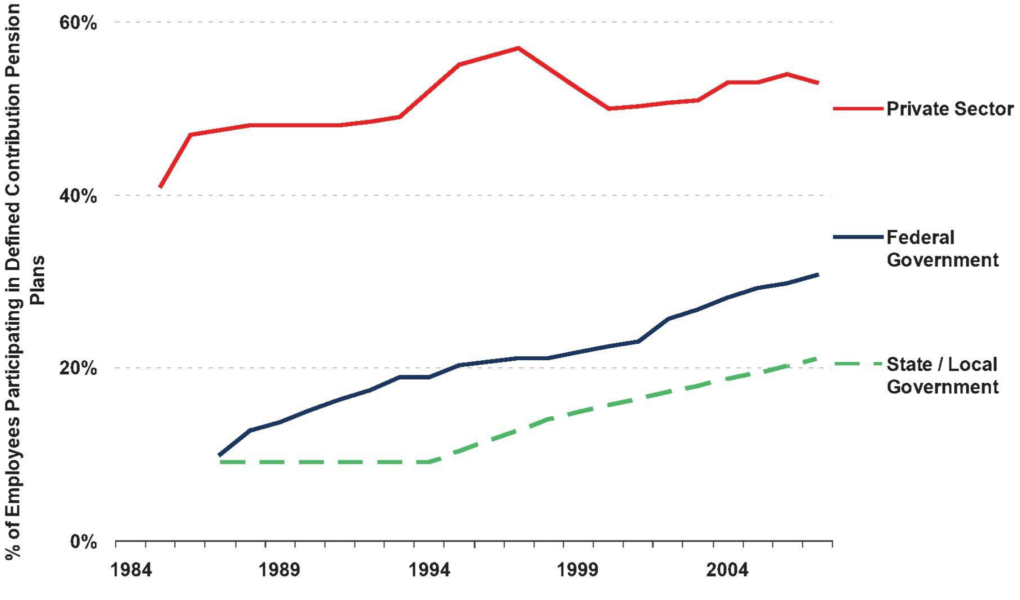
Employees with Guaranteed Pensions (% Participating in Defined Benefit Pensions)
Federal Government vs. State & Local Government vs. Private Sector, 1980-2007



Sources: EBRI Databook on Employee Benefits.

Review Pension Plans: Private Sector Has Embraced "Defined Contribution" Pension Plans, While Federal + State & Local Governments Lag Behind

Participation Rate of Defined Contribution Program: Federal, State/Local vs. Private Sector, 1980-2007

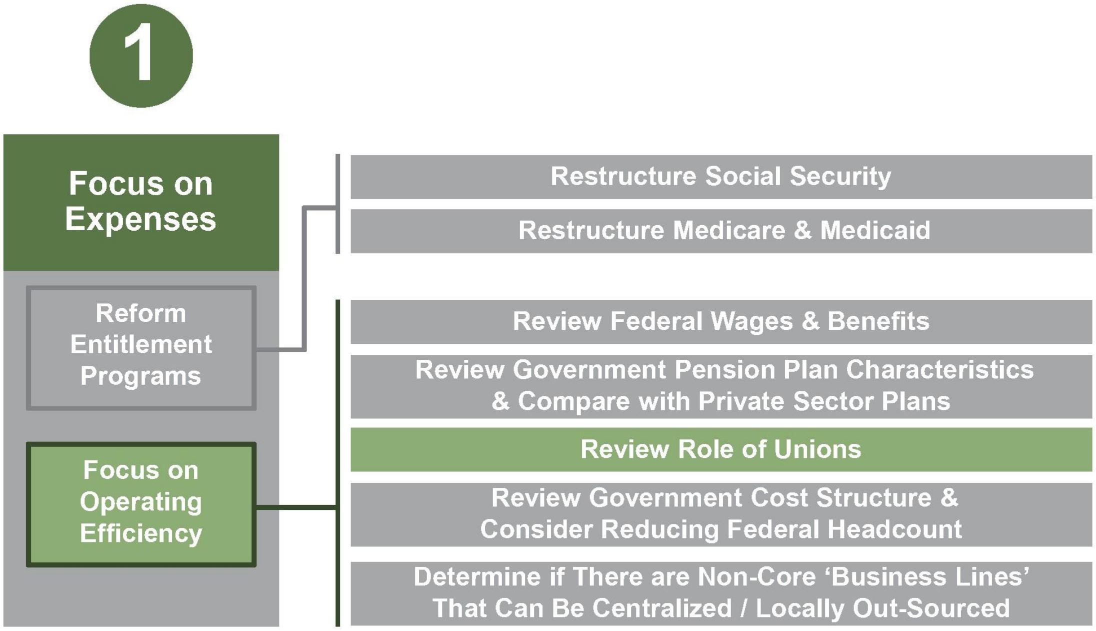


Sources: EBRI Databook on Employee Benefits

Review Pension: Pension Plan Definitions / Characteristics

- **“Guaranteed” Pension Plan** – Retirees receive predetermined monthly retirement benefits from employers despite the funding status / investment returns of their pension funds. Also known as defined benefit pension plan.

- **Defined Contribution Pension Plan** – Retirees contribute specified amounts to their pension funds and receive variable monthly retirement benefits depending on investment returns. Examples include Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) and 401(k) plans.



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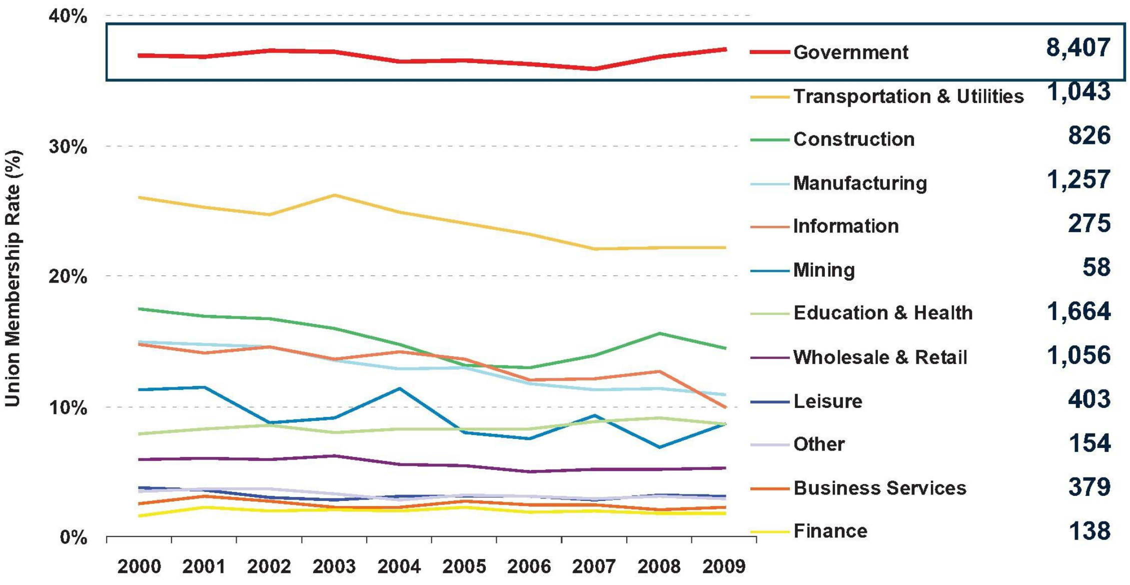
Review Unions: Government Employee Union Membership Rate = 5x of Private Sector Union Membership Rate & Rising

- **More government (federal / state / local) employees belong to unions (8 million) than did private sector employees (7 million) in 2009.**
- Government employee union membership rate of 37% is 5x higher than private sector employee union membership rate of 7% in 2009.
- Private sector union membership rate declined 180 basis points to 7% in 2009 from 9% in 2000, while government employee union membership rate rose 50 basis points 37.4% in 2009 from 36.9% in 2000.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Review Unions: Union Membership Rates by Industry – Government = 37% Unionized vs. Private Sector's 2-22%

Union Membership Rates by Industry, 2000 - 2009



	2009 Union Members (000)
Government	8,407
Transportation & Utilities	1,043
Construction	826
Manufacturing	1,257
Information	275
Mining	58
Education & Health	1,664
Wholesale & Retail	1,056
Leisure	403
Other	154
Business Services	379
Finance	138

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

1

Focus on Expenses

- **Reform Entitlement Programs**
  - Restructure Social Security
  - Restructure Medicare & Medicaid
- **Focus on Operating Efficiency**
  - Review Federal Wages & Benefits
  - Review Government Pension Plan Characteristics & Compare with Private Sector Plans
  - Review Role of Unions
  - Review Government Cost Structure & Consider Reducing Federal Headcount
  - Determine if There are Non-Core ‘Business Lines’ That Can Be Centralized / Locally Out-Sourced

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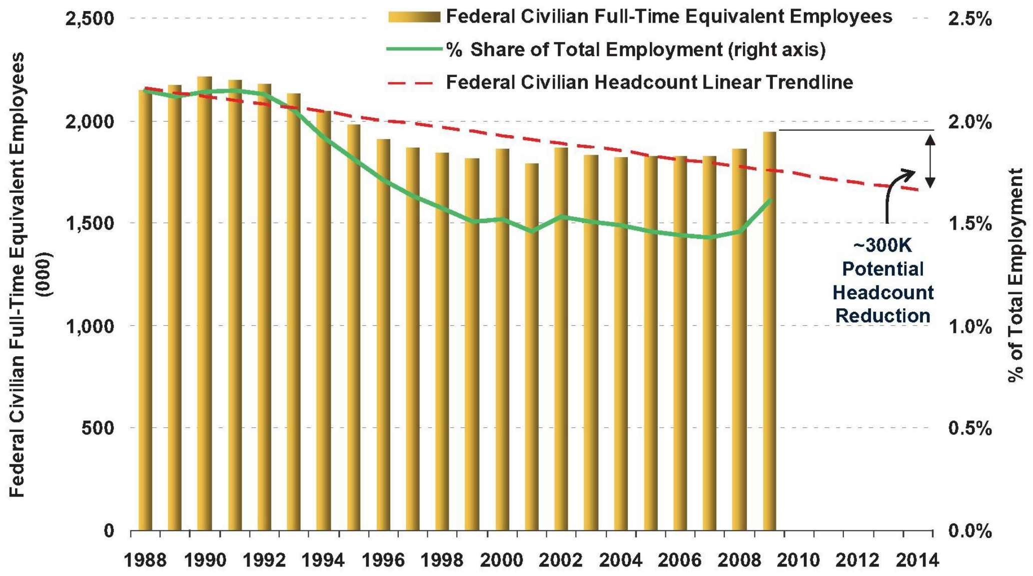
Consider Reducing Federal Headcount

Federal government headcount (ex. military) grew by 56,000 (or 2%) in 2008 and another 107,000 (or 3%) in 2009, while private sector unemployment rose to 10% from 5% in 2007 and private sector headcount fell 1% in 2008 and 6% in 2009.

. *Source: Census Bureau, Bureau of Economic Analysis.*

Federal Headcount Has Risen Over Past Five Years and Is Above Trendline Level

Federal Civilian Headcount & Share of Total Employment, 1988 - 2009



Data source: BEA (1988-2009).

Reduce Headcount: Mathematical Illustration on Reducing Federal Headcount – Could Save Up to $275 Billion Over Next 10 Years, or 4% of Total Deficit

Scenario Analysis on Potential Federal Headcount Reduction & Impact on Budget Deficits

	Savings ($B) For USA Inc. Over			Headcount Reduction
	F2009	**F2010-19E**	**F2010-85E**	**(000)**
Scenario 1				
-- Trim Headcount by 1%	**$2**	**$17**	**$44**	**20**
% of Budget Deficits	***0%***	***0%***	***0%***	
Scenario 2				
-- Trim Headcount by 5%	**$11**	**$91**	**$219**	**98**
% of Budget Deficits	***1%***	***1%***	***1%***	
Scenario 3				
-- Trim Headcount by 10%	**$23**	**$183**	**$439**	**195**
% of Budget Deficits	***2%***	***3%***	***3%***	
Scenario 4 - Trendline*				
-- Trim Headcount by 15%	**$34**	**$274**	**$658**	**293**
% of Budget Deficits	***2%***	***4%***	***4%***	

*Note: Federal fiscal year ends in September. *Based on 20-year trend line, federal civilian headcount would have been 15% below actual levels.*

1

Focus on Expenses

- **Reform Entitlement Programs**
  - Restructure Social Security
  - Restructure Medicare & Medicaid
- **Focus on Operating Efficiency**
  - Review Federal Wages & Benefits
  - Review Government Pension Plan Characteristics & Compare with Private Sector Plans
  - Review Role of Unions
  - Review Government Cost Structure & Consider Reducing Federal Headcount
  - **Determine if There are Non-Core 'Business Lines' That Can Be Centralized / Locally Out-Sourced**

Local Outsourcing/Consolidation: Improve Efficiency of Public Services Through Automation / Scale / Flexibility

1. **Automation** – Government agencies cannot afford to perform manual routine-based processes that can be replaced more efficiently by technology.

2. **Scale** – Consolidation of non-core processes across agencies or outsource non-core processes to local companies can deliver scale efficiencies.

3. **Flexibility** – Outsourced labor enables temporary employment in situations where hiring full-time workers would be costly and unnecessary.

Sources: Adam Frisch, Morgan Stanley Research.

Local Outsourcing/Consolidation: Proven to Be Viable Cost-Cutting Measures for State / Local Governments

	Years	Public Sector	Details	Total Cost Saving ($)	As % of Total Budget[1]	As % of Program Budget[1]
Automation	2002-2010	Missouri State Government	Digitized State Medicaid health record	~87MM	--	--
	1993-2010	Port Authority of New York and New Jersey	*E-ZPass* (electronic toll collection) can process 2.5x to 3x more vehicles per lane than toll attendants	--	--	--
Scale	2003	Pennsylvania State Government	Consolidated office supplies + computer procurement	~$30MM	--	--
	2002-2004	Dept. Management Services, FL	Outsourced HR and supporting IT system to local contractors	~173MM	0.3%	11.5%
	2004-2005	Health and Human Services Commission, TX	Outsourced HR, payroll and enterprise service center to private vendors	~1B	0.8%	5.0%
	2010	Maywood, CA	Outsourced police force to county sheriff in an effort to avoid bankruptcy	~3.7MM	25%	50.7%
Flexibility	2005	American Red Cross	Set up a Family Assistance Hotline within 10 days via an outsourcer (vs. 3-6 months doing it in-house)	--	--	--

Note: 1) Annual Budget of the year when outsourcing program started. Sources: HR Outsourcing in Government Organizations, The Conference Board; Outsourcing Methods & Case Studies, 2009; Maywood, CA data per The Economist. PA state government data per Ed Rendell, Governor of Pennsylvania.) E-ZPass per E-Zpass New Jersey Customer Service Center; Missouri Medicaid case study per ACS; American Red Cross per Tholons, Government Sector Outsourcing.

Focus on Operating Efficiency –

Policy Options From National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform Co-Chairs' Proposal

Focus on Operating Efficiency: Illustrative Policy Options From the Report of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform

Illustrative Policy Options	Deficit Reduction in F2015E
Eliminate 250,000 non-defense service and staff augmentee contractors	$18 billion
Eliminate all earmarks[1]	$16
Freeze federal salaries, bonuses, and other compensation at non-Defense agencies for three years	$15
Cut the federal workforce by 10% (2-for-3 replacement rate)	$13
Create a Cut-and-Invest Committee charged with trimming waste and targeting investment	$11
Slow the growth of foreign aid	$5
Other[2]	$22
Total Deficit Reduction F2015E	**$100 billion**

Note: 1) an earmark is a legislative (especially congressional) provision that directs approved funds to be spent on specific projects, or that directs specific exemptions from taxes or mandated fees. 2) Other includes eliminate NASA funding for commercial spaceflight, terminate low-priority Army Corps of Engineers programs, sell excess federal property, reduce congressional & White House budgets by 15%, reduce unnecessary printing costs and more. Source: National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, "The Moment of Truth: Report of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform," 12/1/10.

What Might a Turnaround Expert Consider?

1

Focus on Expenses

- Reform Entitlement Programs
- Focus on Operating Efficiency

2

Focus on Revenues

- Drive Sustainable Economic Growth
- Consider Changing Tax Policies

Focus on Revenues –
Drive Sustainable Economic Growth + Change Tax Policies

2

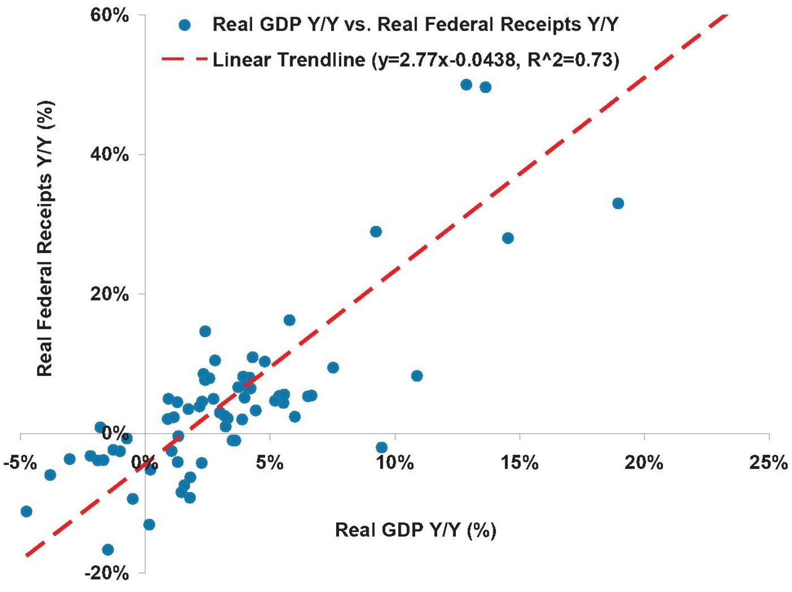
Focus on Revenues

- **Drive Sustainable Economic Growth**
  - Invest in Technology / Infrastructure / Education
  - Increase / Improve Employment
  - Improve Competitiveness
- **Consider Changing Tax Policies**
  - Review Tax Rates
  - Reduce Subsidies / Tax Expenditures*/ Broaden Tax Base

*Note: *Tax subsidies / expenditures are losses to the U.S. Treasury from granting certain deductions, exemptions, or credits (such as those on mortgage interest payments and employer-sponsored health insurance payments) to specific categories of taxpayers.*

GDP Growth =
Biggest Driver of Federal Revenue Growth…& 85% Correlation

1940 – 2009 Historical Correlation Between USA Real GDP Y/Y & Real Federal Receipts Y/Y = 85%



2010E – 2019E

If Real GDP Y/Y is	Real Federal Revenue Could Grow…
5%	7%
4	5
3	2
2	0
1	-2
0	-4
-1	-7
-2	-9
-3	-11
-4	-13
-5	-16

Current Consensus GDP Forecasts

Data source: White House Office of Management & Budget (1940 – 2009).

It's Easy to Gripe About USA Inc.'s High Expense Levels… That Said, High Expenses Could be Covered by High Revenue

- **There are two primary drivers of USA Inc.'s revenue: 1) GDP growth and 2) related tax levies on consumers and businesses.**
- To bring its income statement mechanically to break-even for 2009 (excluding one-time charges), USA Inc. would have needed to raise individual income tax rates by ~2x across-the-board to an average of ~26-30% (from ~13%) of gross income.[1] This certainly seems draconian. And a tax increase of this nature would surely have a significant negative impact on USA's GDP growth as consumers would have far less disposable income to buy goods and services.
- This brings us to a key element of USA's financial challenges – the need to drive economic (GDP) AND related job growth. This is not easy. A material portion of GDP growth over the past few decades was driven by rising consumption aided by rising leverage and we have now entered a period of de-leveraging.
- Stronger economic growth would be hugely beneficial for USA Inc.'s revenues. But the legacy of the financial crisis – severe housing imbalances and the need to complete the long process of writing off private mortgage debt – means that the US recovery will probably remain slow for at least several years. The silver lining: A booming global economy should provide a modest lift to US growth.

Note: 1) USA Inc.'s F2009 revenue shortfall was $997B (excluding one-time discretionary spending items). F2009 total income tax receipts from individuals were $915B. As a result, if one were to raise individual income tax rates alone to achieve financial break-even, one would have to more than double individual income tax rates across-the-board.

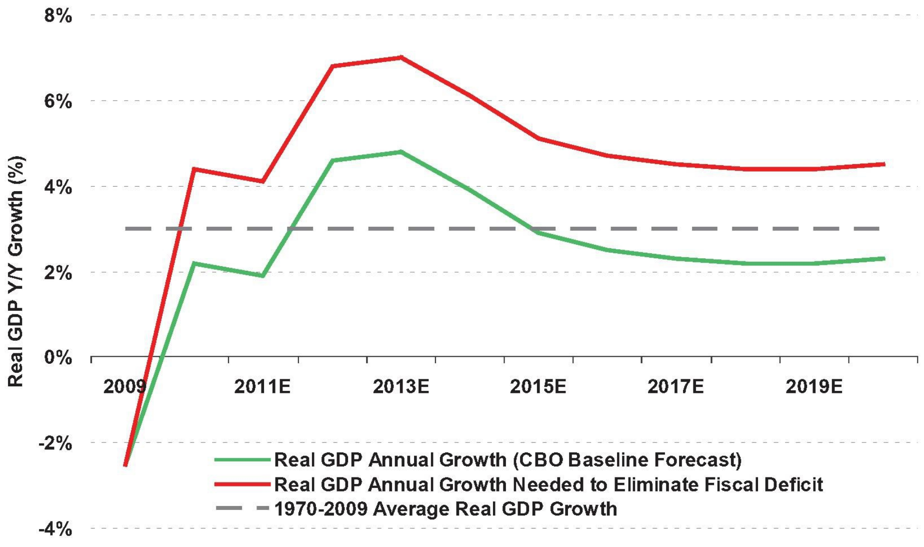
Drive Growth: If Real GDP Grows 0.1 Percentage Point Faster Than Current CBO Projection For F2011-F2020E, the Budget Deficit Could Shrink by 5% Without Other Policy Changes

- CBO analysis shows that for every 0.1 percentage point (pps) increase in real GDP annual growth rate above CBO's baseline estimate for F2011-F2020E, USA Inc.'s revenue (driven by taxes) could be $247 billion higher, spending could be $41 billion lower (driven by reduced welfare spending) and the budget deficit could be reduced by $288 billion, or 5%.

		F2011-F2020E Impact on USA Inc.'s		
CBO's baseline assumption for annual real GDP growth	**What if real GDP grows faster than CBO's forecast by…**	**Revenue** ($B / %)	**Spending** ($B / %)	**Deficit Reduction** ($B / %)
2.1% F2011E **4.4% F2012-14E** **2.4% F2015-20E**	**0.1 pps**	**+$247** +1%	**-$41** --%	**-$288** -5%
	0.5 pps	**+$1,235** +3%	**-$205** --%	**-$1,440** -23%
	1 pps	**+$2,470** +6%	**-$410** -1%	**-$2,880** -46%
	2 pps	**+$4,940** +13%	**-$820** -2%	**-$5,760** -92%

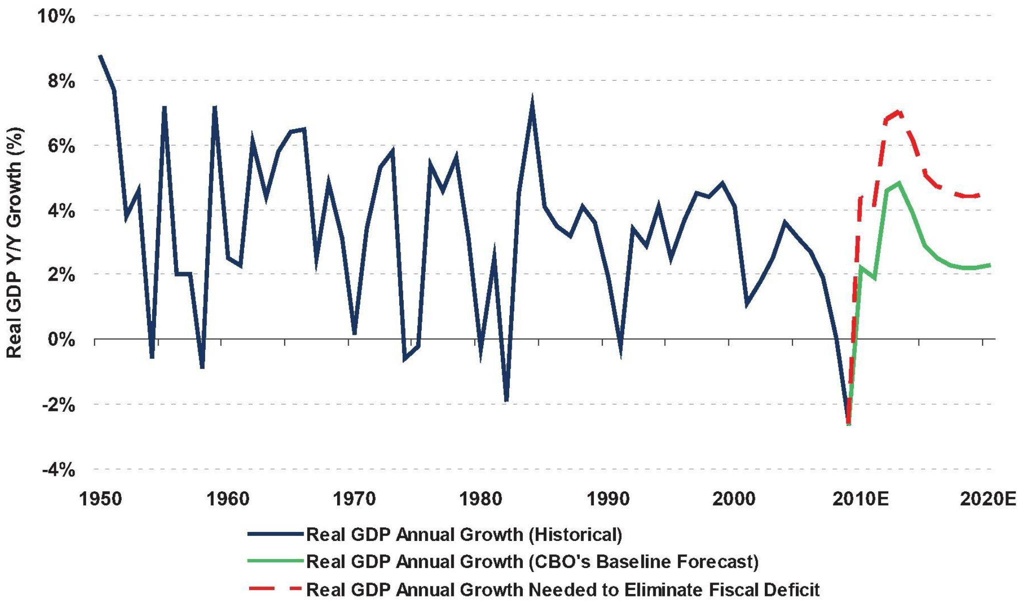
Note: pps is percentage point(s). $ amount and % changes in revenue / spending / deficit are over the entire F2011-F2020E period. Source: CBO, "The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2010 to 2020," 8/10.

How Much Would Real GDP Need to Grow to Drive USA Inc. to Break-Even Without Policy Changes? 6-7% in F2012E-F2014E & 4-5% in F2015-F2020E…Well Above 40-Year Average of 3%


CBO's Baseline Real GDP Growth vs. Required Real GDP Growth for a Balanced Budget Between F2011E and F2020E

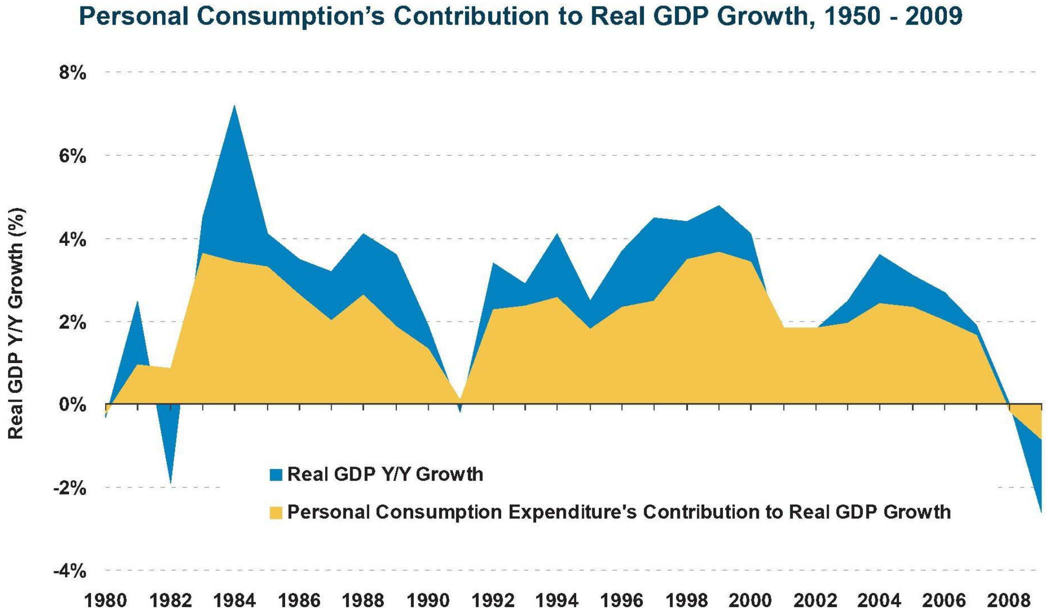
Source: CBO, "The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2010 to 2020," 8/10.

It's Highly Unlikely That Annual Real GDP Can Grow Faster Than 6%... It Happened Only 8 Times in Past 60 Years and Was Always Linked to a Cyclical Bounce Back


CBO's Baseline Real Annual GDP Growth vs. Required Real Annual GDP Growth for a Balanced Budget Between F2011E and F2020E in Historical Context (1950-2020E)

Source: CBO, "The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2010 to 2020," 8/10.

USA Consumers = Biggest Demand Driver For GDP Growth, Until 2007



Source: BEA.

Beginning in 2007, Wealth Destruction + High Unemployment Forced Consumers to Save Again, Potentially Reducing Short-Term Demand for Goods & Services

3% average annual GDP growth (1981 - 2007) was helped as the average USA consumer:

1) Increased personal consumption as percent of GDP to 71% from 62%;

2) Decreased personal savings rate to 2% of disposable income from 11%;

Beginning in 2007, things changed as:

1) The average US consumer experienced a material decline in the value of his / her largest investment assets (real estate and equities) from 2007 to 2009 when peak-to-trough valuations for USA residential real estate declined 30% and the S&P 500 declined 56%;

2) Unemployment rose to 10% in 2009 / 2010 from 30-year trough of 4% in 1999, creating uncertainty regarding future personal income levels;

3) Personal savings rate increased to 6% in 2009 / 2010 of disposable income from 2% in 2007, as uncertainty grows and appetite for consumption ebbs;

All in, the key driver of US GDP growth – the US consumer's ability to spend – is severely constrained in the short term as he / she aims to rebuild savings and contain spending. This raises the question – 'How fast can US GDP grow annually over the next ten years?' Determining ways to drive GDP (and related job growth) is crucial…

Source: Residential real estate decline based on CQ1:07 to CQ1:09 changes in S&P Case-Shiller Home Price Index. GDP growth & composition / personal savings rate per BEA. Unemployment rate per BLS.

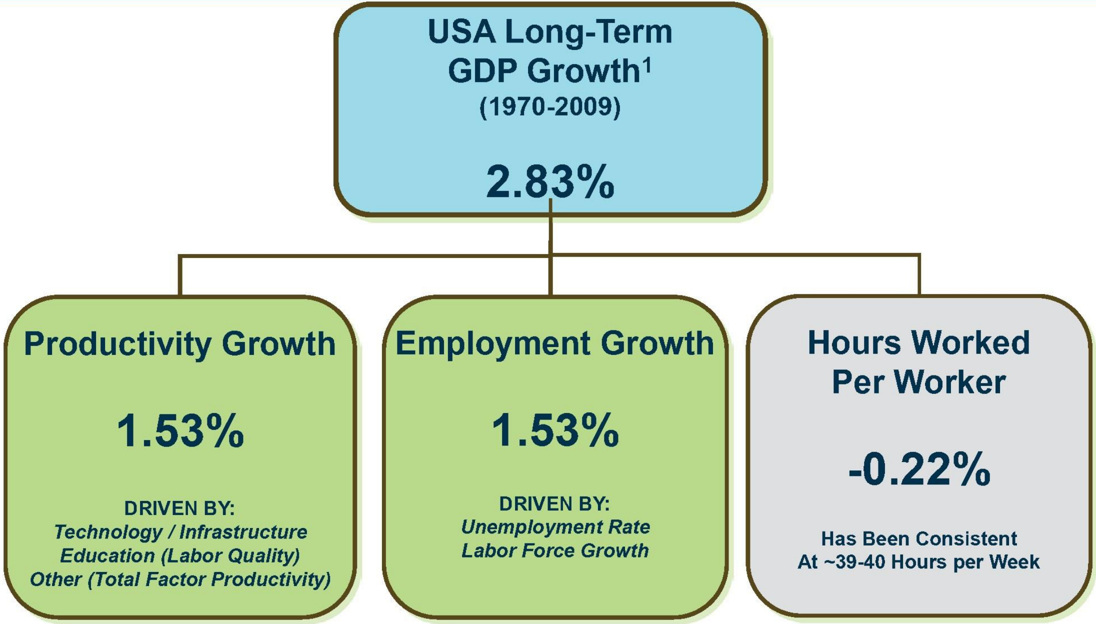
Economic Policy–Short-Term vs. Long-Term

- Economic theory + experience of the Great Depression suggest government can use fiscal policy (increase direct spending + investment) to offset near-term shortfalls in private demand.

- In the long term, USA Inc. cannot sustain higher levels of direct spending / investment without crowding out private consumption / investment.

- Therefore, USA Inc. should prioritize and allocate available resources to stimulate growth in productivity + employment, which drive long-term GDP growth.

Improving Employment, Productivity, & Hours Worked Are Source of Sustainable Long-Term GDP Growth



USA Long-Term GDP Growth[1]
(1970-2009)

2.83%

Productivity Growth

1.53%

DRIVEN BY:
Technology / Infrastructure
Education (Labor Quality)
Other (Total Factor Productivity)

Employment Growth

1.53%

DRIVEN BY:
Unemployment Rate
Labor Force Growth

Hours Worked Per Worker

-0.22%

Has Been Consistent
At ~39-40 Hours per Week

Note: 1) all growth numbers are rounded average annual growth rates and are adjusted for inflation. 2.83% is the average annual GDP growth rate from 1970 to 2009, per BEA. Labor force growth of 1.53% is the average annual growth rate from 1970 to 2009, per BLS. Hours worked per worker per OECD. Productivity growth of 1.53% is calculated by subtracting employment growth and hours worked per worker growth from real GDP growth. Average annual growth rate of 1.53% is roughly in line with other estimates such as Dale W. Jorgenson, Mun S. Ho, Kevin J. Stiroh, "Growth of U.S. Industries and Investments in Information Technology and Higher Education" <http://www.nber.org/chapters/c10627>

Focus on **Productivity** & **Employment** Growth, Each of Which Accounts for ~50% of Long-Term Real GDP Growth

- **Investments in Technology / Infrastructure / Education Boost Productivity.**
  - Newer technology improves efficiency of communication and lowers costs of providing goods and services.
  - Better infrastructure reduces transportation costs for input and output materials
  - Better education improves general labor quality and enables specialization for more efficiency.
- **Removing Restrictions / Uncertainties in Various Regulations Can Stimulate Private Employment.**
  - Immigration does not reduce employment opportunities for US-born workers, per Federal Reserve study in 8/10.
  - Removing tax / regulatory uncertainty could help create hiring incentives for private industries.
- **Hours Worked per Worker Have Remained Steady at ~39-40 Hours per Week From 1970 to 2009 and Will Likely Remain Steady.**

Source: OECD, Dale W. Jorgenson, Mun S. Ho, Kevin J. Stiroh, "Growth of U.S. Industries and Investments in Information Technology and Higher Education" http://www.nber.org/chapters/c10627, Federal Reserve.

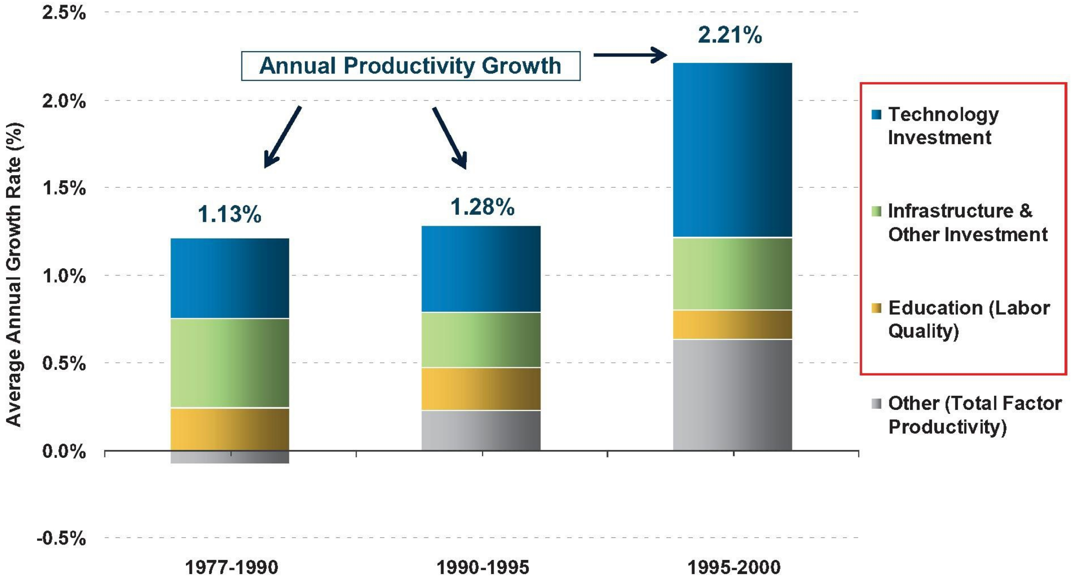
2

Focus on Revenues

- **Drive Sustainable Economic Growth**
  - **Invest in Technology / Infrastructure / Education**
  - Increase / Improve Employment
  - Improve Competitiveness
- Consider Changing Tax Policies
  - Review Tax Rates
  - Reduce Subsidies / Tax Expenditures*/ Broaden Tax Base

Technology + Infrastructure + Education Investments Drove ~90% of Labor Productivity Growth for Past ~30 Years

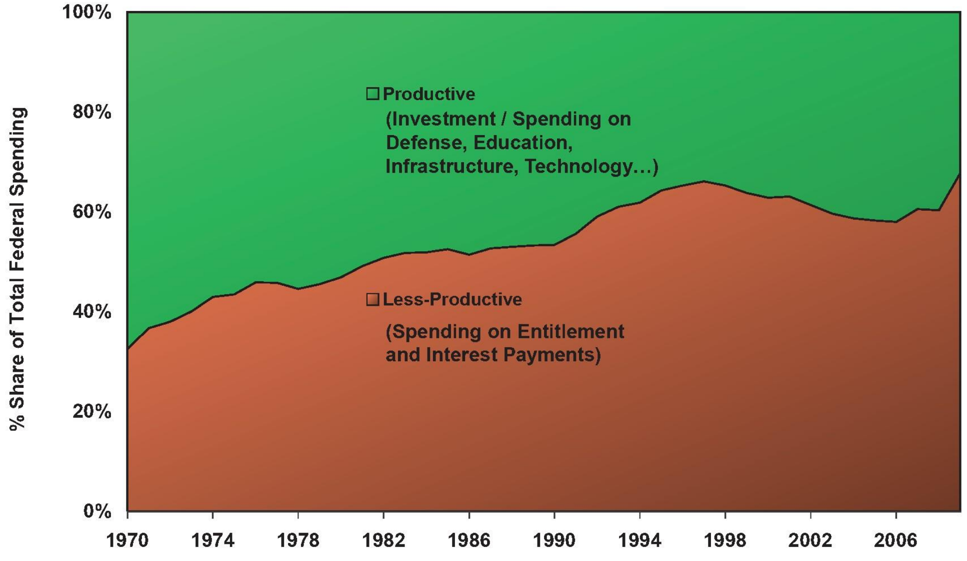
Sources of USA Average Labor Productivity Growth, 1977-2000



Note: Total Factor Productivity is the portion of output not explained by the amount of inputs used in production.
Source: Dale W. Jorgenson, Mun S. Ho, Kevin J. Stiroh, "Growth of U.S. Industries and Investments in Information Technology and Higher Education" <http://www.nber.org/chapters/c10627>

However, USA Inc. Has Increasingly Allocated Resources Away from Productive Technology + Infrastructure + Education *Investment / Spending* Toward Less-Productive Entitlement Program *Spending*

USA Real Federal Productive vs. Less-Productive Spending*, 1970-2009



*Note: *Total spending excludes one-time items (such as TARP / GSE / ARRA) for F2008 / F2009 data.*
Data source: White House Office of Management & Budget (1970-2009).

Drive Growth: Technology

Technology Improves Efficiency of Communication and Lowers Costs of Providing Goods and Services

Technology Has Driven Significant Wealth & Job Creation

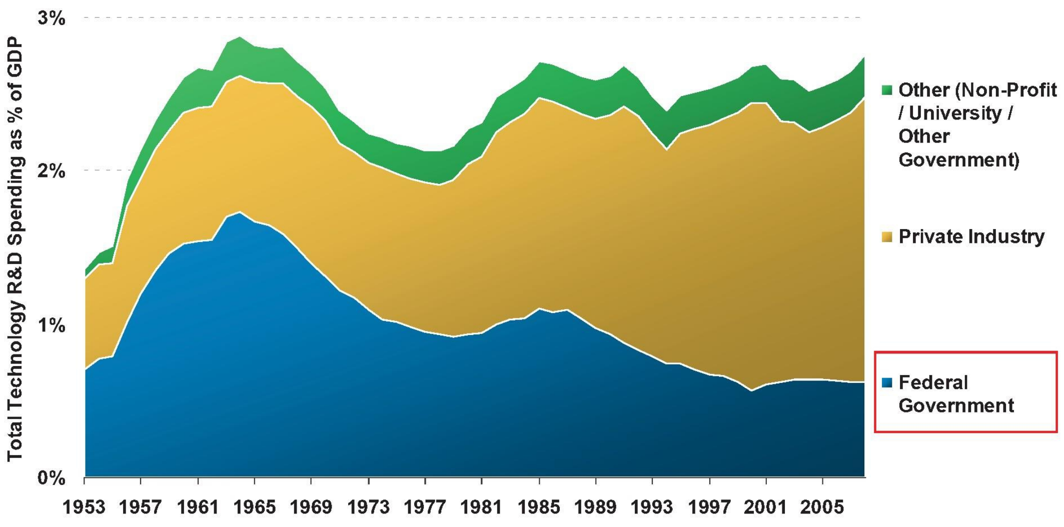
S&P 500 Sector Market Value Share, 1995 – 2010

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Information Technology	**9%**	**12%**	**12%**	**18%**	**29%**	**21%**	**18%**	**14%**	**18%**	**16%**	**15%**	**15%**	**17%**	**15%**	**20%**	**19%**
Financials	13	15	17	15	13	17	18	20	21	21	21	22	18	13	15	16
Consumer Staples	13	13	12	11	7	8	8	9	11	10	9	9	10	13	12	12
Health Care	11	10	11	12	9	14	14	15	13	13	13	12	12	15	12	11
Energy	9	9	8	6	6	7	6	6	6	7	9	10	13	13	11	11
Industrials	13	13	12	10	10	11	11	12	11	12	11	11	12	11	10	10
Consumer Discretionary	13	12	12	13	13	10	13	13	11	12	11	11	8	8	10	10
Utilities	5	4	3	3	2	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4
Materials	6	6	4	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4
Telecom Services	9	7	7	8	8	5	5	4	3	3	3	4	4	4	3	3
S&P 500 Mkt Cap ($T)	**$5**	**$6**	**$8**	**$10**	**$12**	**$12**	**$10**	**$8**	**$10**	**$11**	**$11**	**$13**	**$13**	**$8**	**$10**	**$11**

Note: 2010 data as of 12/31/10. Source: FactSet, Bloomberg.

But USA Inc. Has Steadily Scaled Back Investment in Technology R&D Since the 1960s…the Good News is That Private Industry Has Picked Up Lots of Slack, So Far

Total USA Technology Research & Development Spending as % of GDP by Funding Source, 1953 – 2008



Source: National Science Foundation, Science and Engineering Indicators, 2008.

For GDP Growth & Job Creation, It's Key for Private Industry to Remain Incentivized to Invest in R&D

As we contemplate our future, we must accept the fact that many of the assumptions under which business operated for the past 50 years no longer hold true…If we are committed to investing in ideas to improve – not just maintain – what we have and what we know, the United States will do more than just recover from this recession. We will emerge, once again, as a competitive, global powerhouse…Innovation…accrues to countries in proportion to the quality and rigor of their educational systems…The future of every nation will be shaped by new ideas and creativity. These are the engines of future prosperity.

– Paul Otellini, CEO, Intel Corporation, 2/10/09

Government targeted and 'blue sky' investment in technology (and defense) has led to crucial technology inventions for America – such as ARPANET / Internet (1970s) and Global Positioning System (1980s)..., which, on a net basis, have created jobs, wealth and related tax revenue.

Government investment in technology remains important, but, perhaps more important, government must help incentivize private industry (via tax policies such as allowing companies to repatriate overseas cash at lower tax rates[1] and other tools) to invest in domestic research & development and to create jobs…and create a stable environment in which to operate.

Note: 1) See John Chambers and Safra Catz, "The Overseas Profits Elephant in the Room," The Wall Street Journal, 10/20/10.

Drive Growth: Infrastructure

Better Infrastructure Reduces Transportation Costs For Input and Output Materials

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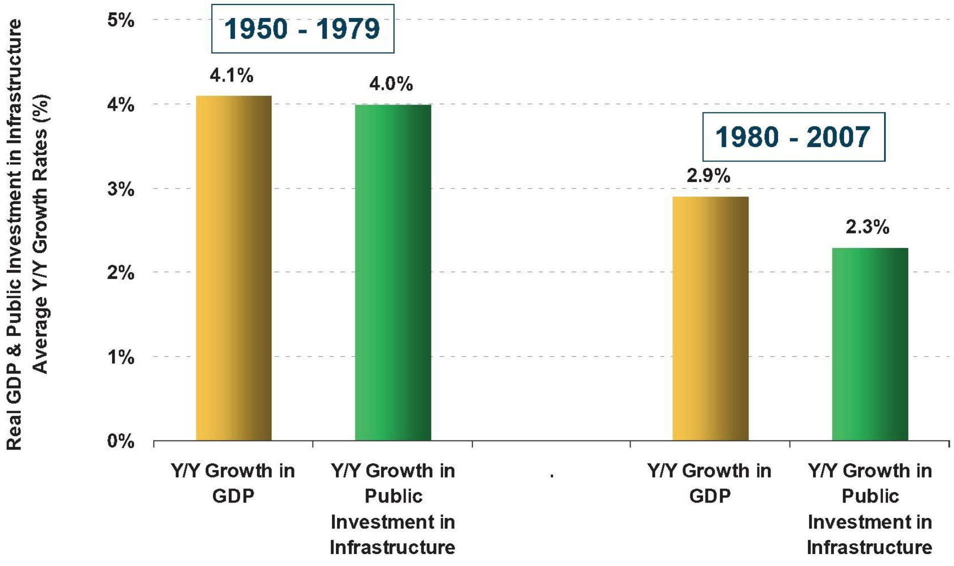
Public Investment in Infrastructure Has Helped Drive GDP Growth

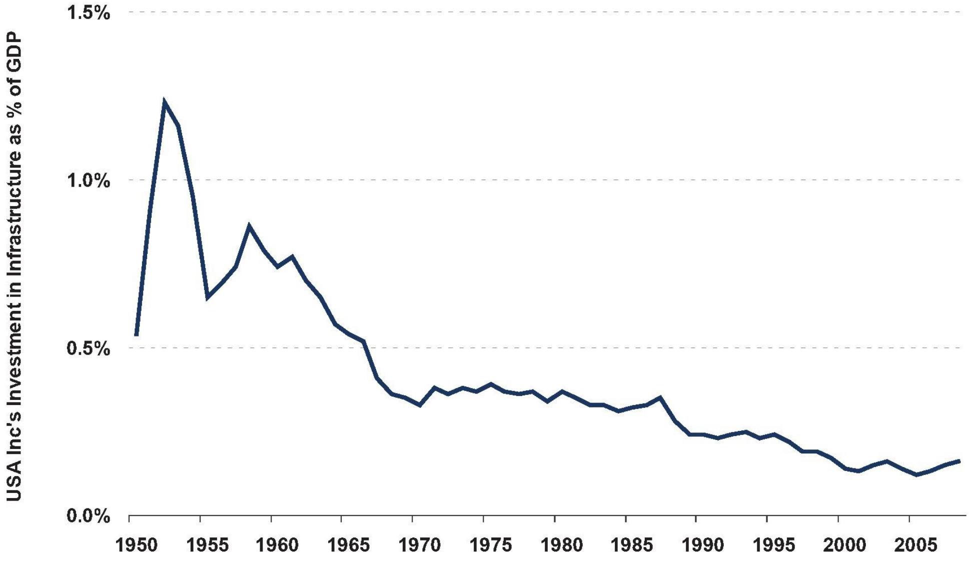
USA Real GDP and Public Investment in Infrastructure Average Y/Y Growth, 1950 -2007



Source: Political Economy Research Institute, "How Infrastructure Investments Support the U.S. Economy: Employment, Productivity and Growth", 1/09.

But USA Inc.'s Investment in Infrastructure Has Been Steadily Declining for Five Decades…

USA Inc. (Federal) Investment in Infrastructure as % of GDP, 1950 -2008



Source: BEA.

…Leading to Deteriorating Infrastructure in America and Pent-Up Demand for Investment

American Society of Civil Engineers' Report Card Grades for America's Infrastructure, 1988 vs. 2009

	1988	2009
Aviation	B-	D
Bridges	--	C
Dams	--	D
Drinking Water	B-	D-
Energy	--	D+
Hazardous Waste	D	D
Inland Waterways	B	D-
Levees	--	D-
Rail	--	C-
Roads	C+	D-
School Buildings	D	D
Solid Waste	C-	C+
Transit	C-	D
Wastewater	C	D-
Overall USA Infrastructure G.P.A.	**C**	**D**
Cost to Improve	**--**	**$2.2T**

Note: The first infrastructure grades were given by the National Council on Public Works Improvements in its report "Fragile Foundations: A Report on America's Public Works, released in February 1988." Source: American Society of Civil Engineers, "2009 Report Card for America's Infrastructure".

Drive Growth: Education

Better Education Improves General Labor Quality and Enables Specialization For More Efficiency

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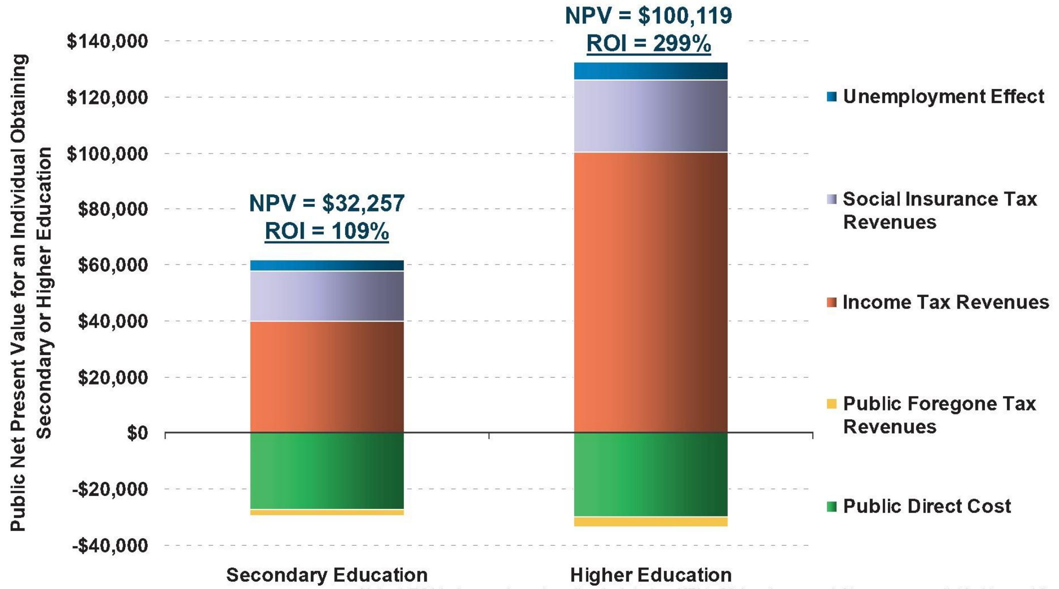
Education = High Long-Term ROI* Investment
Each $1 of Government Spending Could Generate Up to $3 of Incremental Tax Return

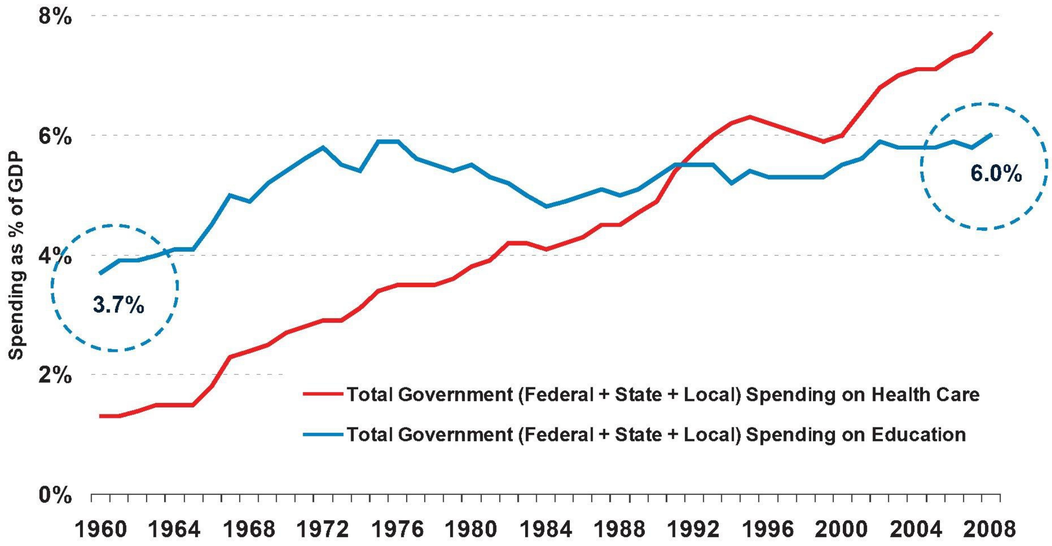
USA Inc. Net Present Value (NPV) for an Individual Obtaining Secondary / Higher Education, 2005**



*Note: * ROI (return on investment) calculated as NPV of future incremental tax revenues divided by cost for government to support an individual for education. **Limited to male samples, female samples tend to have a lower public NPV. Source: OECD.*

While Government Spending on Education Increased 60% Over Past 50 Years, At Margin, Government Spent More on Healthcare…

USA Total Government Healthcare vs. Education Spending as % of GDP, 1960 – 2008



Note: Total government spending on healthcare includes Medicare, Medicaid and other programs and total government spending on education includes spending on pre-primary through tertiary education programs. Source: Dept. of Education, Dept. of Health & Human Services.

Despite Increased Government Spending, USA Education is Falling Behind – Math / Science Tests Scores Well Below OECD Average & Getting Worse Though Self Confidence Rising

USA Ranking Out of 30-34* OECD Countries

in PISA (Program for International Student Assessment for 15-Year Olds)

2000 / 2003 / 2006 / 2009

	2000	2003	2006	2009	2000-2009 Trend
Mathematics	18	23	25	25	↓↓
Science	14	19	21	17	↓
Reading	16	15	--**	14	↑
Self Confidence[1]	2	1	1	--	↑

*Note: *30 OECD countries participated in 2000 / 2003 PISA, 34 OECD countries participated in 2006 / 2009 PISA. 1) Confidence is the self-perceived efficacy in learning abilities (for year 2000); mathematical problem solving abilities (for year 2003) and scientific problem solving abilities (for year 2006). USA tied in confidence ranking with Canada, Hungary, Slovakia, Switzerland and Liechtenstein in 2003 and tied with Poland and Canada in 2006. **2006 reading scores for USA were rendered invalid because of a printing error in questionnaire instructions. Source: OECD.*

USA Student Achievement Rankings* in Mathematics / Science Have Fallen vs. Other OECD Countries

Mathematics Ranking*

	2000	2009
1	Japan	S. Korea
2	S. Korea	Finland
3	New Zealand	Switzerland
4	Finland	Japan
5	Australia	Canada
6	Canada	Netherlands
7	Switzerland	New Zealand
8	UK	Belgium
9	Belgium	Australia
10	France	Germany
11	Austria	Estonia
12	Denmark	Iceland
13	Iceland	Denmark
14	Sweden	Slovenia
15	Ireland	Norway
16	Norway	France
17	Czech Republic	Slovakia
18	**USA**	Austria
19	Germany	Poland
20	Hungary	Sweden
21	Spain	Czech Republic
22	Poland	UK
23	Italy	Hungary
24	Portugal	Luxembourg
25	Greece	**USA**
26	Luxembourg	Ireland
27	Mexico	Portugal
28		Spain
29		Italy
30		Greece
31		Israel
32		Turkey
33		Chile
34		Mexico

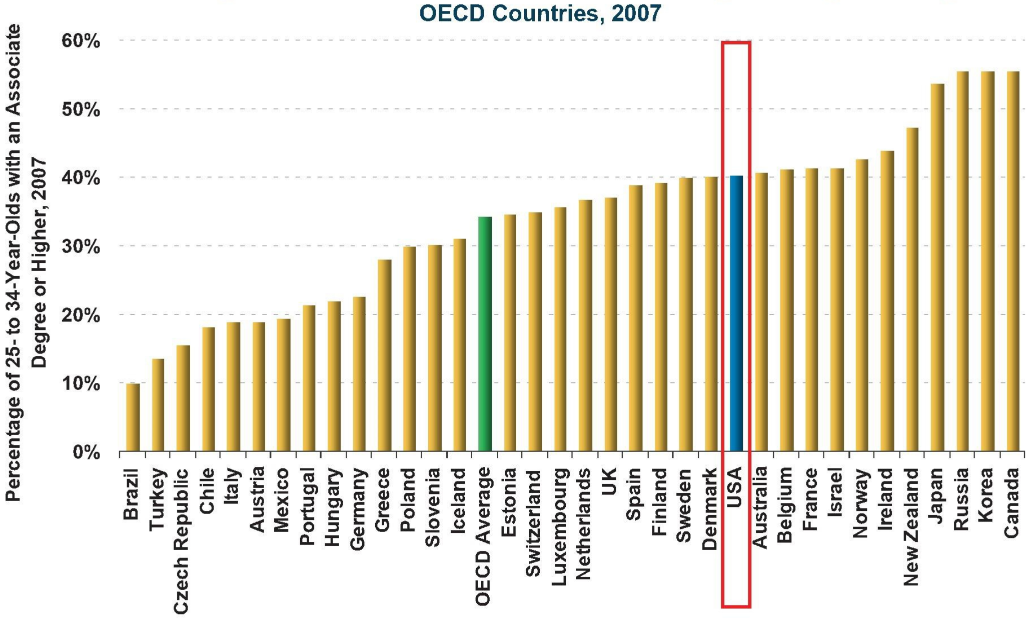
Science Ranking*

	2000	2009
1	Korea	Finland
2	Japan	Japan
3	Finland	S. Korea
4	UK	New Zealand
5	Canada	Canada
6	New Zealand	Estonia
7	Australia	Australia
8	Austria	Netherlands
9	Ireland	Germany
10	Sweden	Switzerland
11	Czech Republic	UK
12	France	Slovenia
13	Norway	Poland
14	**USA**	Ireland
15	Hungary	Belgium
16	Iceland	Hungary
17	Belgium	**USA**
18	Switzerland	Czech Republic
19	Spain	Norway
20	Germany	Denmark
21	Poland	France
22	Denmark	Iceland
23	Italy	Sweden
24	Greece	Austria
25	Portugal	Portugal
26	Luxembourg	Slovak Republic
27	Mexico	Italy
28		Spain
29		Luxembourg
30		Greece
31		Israel
32		Turkey
33		Chile
34		Mexico

*Note: *USA ranking out of OECD countries in PISA (Program for International Student Assessment for 15-Year Olds). Source: OECD.*

USA Young Adults' (25-34) Higher-Education* Penetration Significantly Lags Behind Canada / Korea / Russia / Japan

Percentage of 25- to 34-Year-Olds with an Associate Degree or Higher Among OECD Countries, 2007



*Note: *Higher education defined as post-secondary (college / university) education. Source: OECD.*

2

Focus on Revenues

- **Drive Sustainable Economic Growth**
  - Invest in Technology / Infrastructure / Education
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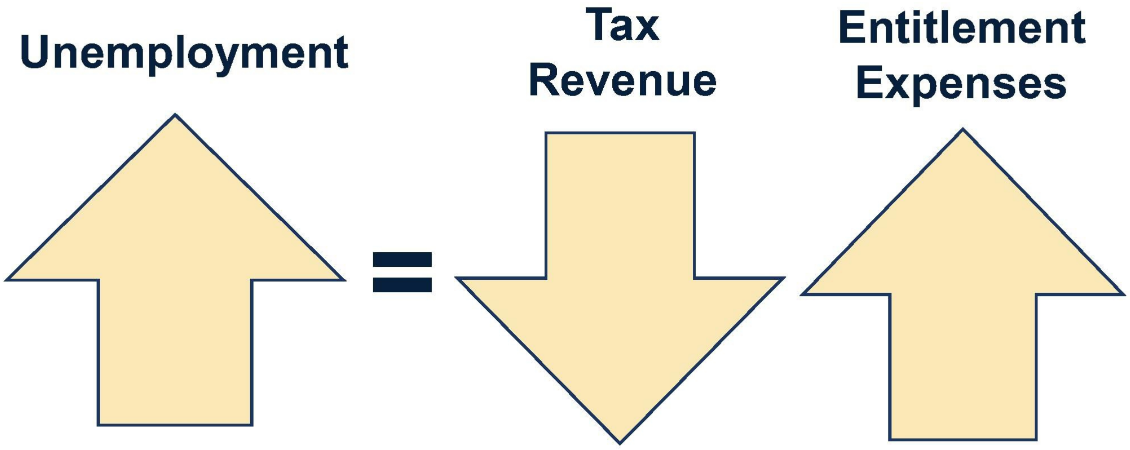
- **Consider Changing Tax Policies**
  - Review Tax Rates
  - Reduce Subsidies / Tax Expenditures*/ Broaden Tax Base

Employment = Key to Growth in Federal Revenue & Expenses

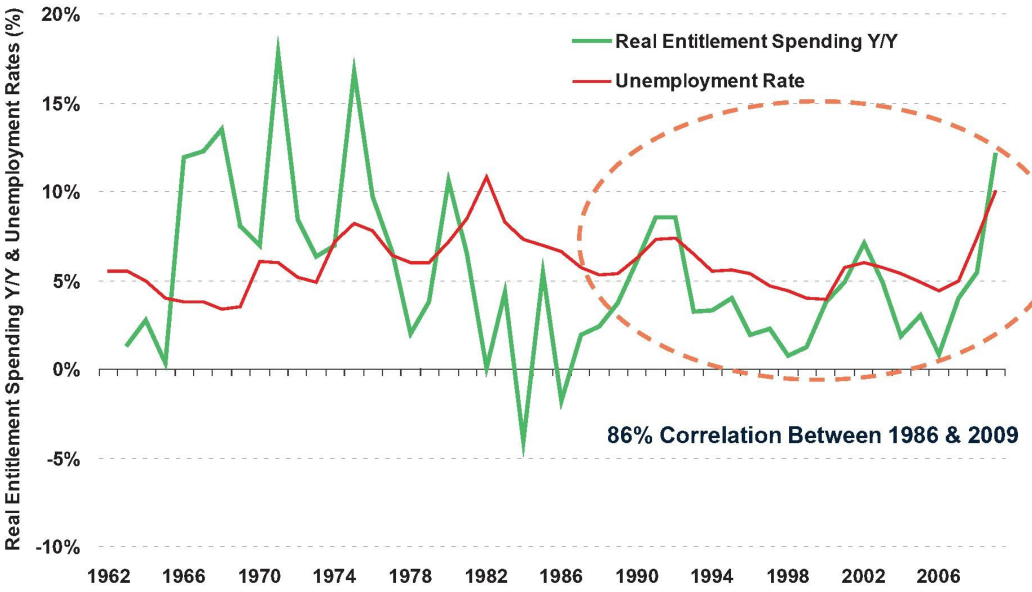
The deficit problem is exacerbated by the business cycle.

A stagnant or declining job market means lower income (via tax revenue) and higher outlays (via entitlement expenses) for USA Inc.



Though Entitlements Are Structural, Not a Cyclical Problem, Entitlement Outlays Go Up with High Unemployment

Real Entitlement Spending Y/Y Growth & Unemployment Rates, 1962 - 2009



Note: Real spending adjusted for inflation. Fiscal year ends in September. Source: White House Office of Management & Budget, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Increase Employment – High-Level Policy Options to Consider

Short-run options:

1) Payroll tax holiday ***and/or***
2) Employment tax credit ***and/or***
3) Job training ***and/or***
4) Restore labor mobility by reducing housing imbalances

Medium- to long-run options:

1) Reduce employer health care costs ***and/or***
2) Improve vocational training/education ***and/or***
3) Encourage inward foreign direct investment, “onshoring” which would increase domestic employment

Source: Richard Berner, “Employment Prospects and Policies to Improve Them” (2/26/10), Morgan Stanley Research.

Increase Employment: Structural Problems in USA Labor Force High Healthcare Costs + Skills Mismatch + Labor Immobility

- **Healthcare costs may be a barrier to hiring for employers**
  - Healthcare benefits = 8% of average total employee compensation; grew at 6.9% CAGR from 1998 to 2008 compared with 4.5% CAGR in salaries.
  - Healthcare benefits are fixed costs as they are paid on an annual per-worker basis and do not vary with hours worked.
  - As employers try to lower fixed costs to right-size to reduced revenue levels, layoffs are the only way to reduce fixed healthcare costs.

- **Skills mismatch may be a barrier to hiring for employers**
  - A large portion of the long-term unemployed may lack requisite skills.
  - 14% of firms reported difficulty filling positions due to the lack of suitable talent, per 5/10 Manpower Research survey.

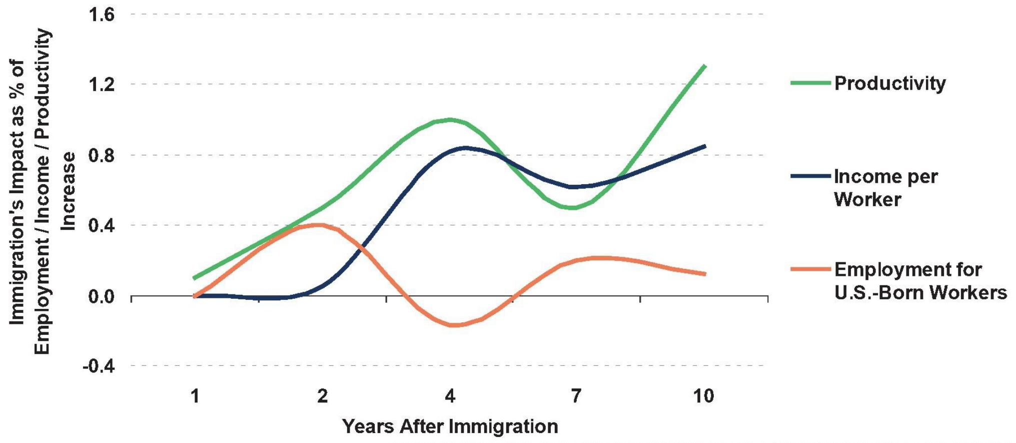
- **Labor immobility resulting from the housing bust may be a barrier to hiring**
  - One in four homeowners are "trapped" because they owe more than their houses are worth, so they cannot move to take new jobs – until they sell or walk away.

Source: Richard Berner, "Why is US Employment So Weak" (7/23/10), Morgan Stanley Research.

Increase Employment: Immigration Does Not Take Away Jobs in USA; It Improves Productivity + Boosts Income per Worker

- **Immigration = Positive Impact on USA Productivity & Income per Worker**
- **Immigration = Neutral Impact on Employment for U.S.-Born Workers**

% Change in USA Productivity / Income per Worker / Employment for U.S.-Based Workers In Response to an Inflow of Immigrants Equal to 1% of Employment



Source: Giovanni Peri, "The Effect of Immigrants on U.S. Employment and Productivity," 8/30/2010 Federal Reserve Board of San Francisco (FRBSF) Economic Letter 2010-26.

2

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Without appropriate government incentives in Education / Technology / Infrastructure / Employment, USA Inc. may continue to lose relative competitive strength to other countries.

Compared to 10 Years Ago, USA is Losing Competitiveness at the Margin vs. Its Peers

- **McKinsey conducted a study in 2010 that compares the USA with other countries on 20 attributes related to economic fundamentals, business climate, human capital and infrastructure. McKinsey compared current status vs. status in 2000.**
- We augmented the McKinsey study with 9 additional attributes across those aforementioned areas as well as government spending metrics.
- Through this study, we found that **America**, relative to other countries, **improved on none of the 29 attributes**, **remained the same on 9 attributes** (including GDP per capita, public debt as % of GDP, public spending on healthcare, public spending on education, growth in local innovation clusters, population & demographic profile, retention of foreign-born talents, total healthcare spending and cost-adjusted labor productivity) and **deteriorated on 20** (including trade surplus, national spending on R&D, industrial production, corporate tax rate, business environment, FDI, tax incentives for R&D, number of patent applications, availability of high-quality labor, higher education penetration, telecom & transportation infrastructure, etc.).

USA Ranking High in Country Attractiveness Indicators But Losing Share at the Margin…

		US Relative Position		
	Key metrics	**Ten Years Ago**	**Today**	**Trend**
Economic Fundamentals	**Household consumption**	🟩	🟩	▼
	Household consumption growth	🟩	🟧	▼
	GDP	🟩	🟩	▼
	GDP per capita[2]	🟧	🟧	—
	Stock market capitalization	🟩	🟩	▼
	Technology company market cap[2]	🟩	🟩	▼
	Industrial production	🟩	🟧	▼
	Trade as % of GDP	🟨	🟨	▼
	Trade surplus[2]	🟥	🟥	▼
	National spending on R&D	🟨	🟨	▼
Government Spending	**Defense spending[2]**	🟩	🟩	▼
	Government public debt as % GDP[2]	🟨	🟨	—
	Public healthcare spending as % of GDP[2]	🟧	🟧	—
	Government surplus as % of GDP[2]	🟥	🟥	▼
	Public expenditure on education	🟩	🟩	—

🟩 **Top Ranked** 🟧 **Top Quartile** 🟨 **Average** 🟥 **Bottom Quartile**

Source: 1) Growth and competitiveness in the United States: The role of its multinational companies, McKinsey & Company. 2) estimates based on data from IMF / OECD

…USA Ranking High in Country Attractiveness Indicators But Losing Share at the Margin

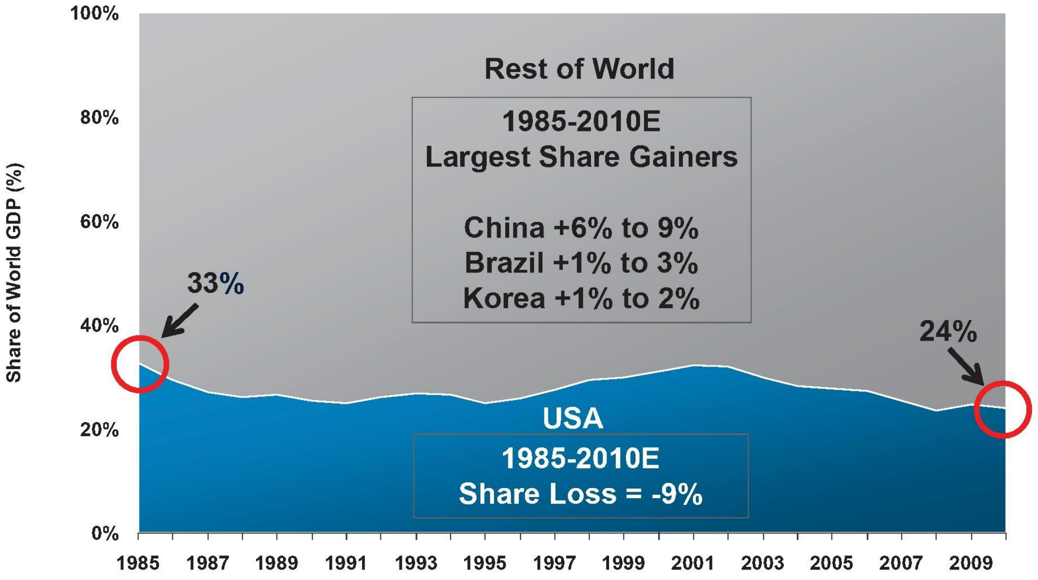
		US relative position		
	Key metrics	**Ten Years Ago**	**Today**	**Trend**
Business climate	Statutory corporate tax rate	🟨	🟥	▼
	Business environment	🟩	🟧	▼
	FDI as % of GDP	🟨	🟨	▼
	Growth of local innovation clusters	🟩	🟩	—
	Tax incentives for R&D	🟧	🟨	▼
Human capital	Population and demographic profile	🟧	🟧	—
	Availability of high-quality labor	🟩	🟩	▼
	Retention of foreign-born talent	🟩	🟩	—
	Cost-adjusted labor productivity	🟨	🟨	—
	Total healthcare spending per Capita[2]	🟩	🟩	—
	Higher education penetration[2]	🟩	🟧	▼
	Number of patent applications	🟩	🟧	▼
Infrastructure	Transportation	🟩	🟧	▼
	Telecommunications	🟩	🟧	▼

🟩 **Top Ranked** 🟧 **Top Quartile** 🟨 **Average** 🟥 **Bottom Quartile**

Source: 1) Growth and competitiveness in the United States: The role of its multinational companies, McKinsey & Company. 2) estimates based on data from IMF / OECD

USA's Share of Global GDP Has Declined from 33% in 1985 to 24% in 2010, While China / Brazil / Korea's Shares Have Risen

Share of World GDP, USA vs. China / Brazil / India, 1985 – 2010E



Note: Data are NOT adjusted for purchasing power parity. Source: IMF.

2

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Simple Tax Math* – Big Across-the-Board Tax Rate Increases Would Be Needed to Potentially Generate Meaningful Revenue Improvements

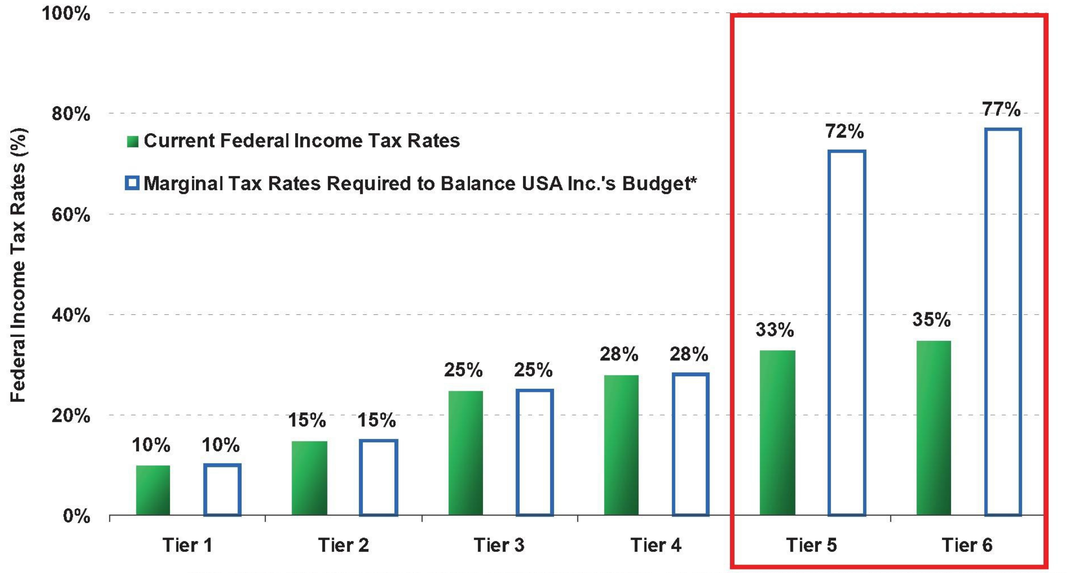
Each one percentage point across-the-board tax rate increase would generate an incremental $127 billion revenue for USA Inc. in F2010E[1]...excluding any related negative impact on spending / GDP growth, which is difficult to do…

Across-the-Board Tax Rate Increase	Hypothetical Revenue Increase for USA Inc. in F2010E ($ billions)	…Which Would Reduce Estimated Losses in F2010E by
1 Percentage Point	$127	8%
2 Percentage Points (pps)	$254	16%
3 pps	$381	24%
4 pps	$508	33%
5 pps	$635	41%
10 pps	$1,270	82%

*Note: *The simple tax math presented here are pure mathematical illustrations – we simply calculated how big a broad-based tax rate increase (for individual and corporate income, as well as payroll) would have to be for USA Inc. to financial break-even. These calculations are merely mechanical illustrations and are not meant to portray realistic solutions. 1) Incremental dollar amount calculated as 1% of projected total personal & corporate income, which historically has been at ~87% of GDP. Source: F2010E revenue & deficit per White House OMB, GDP per CBO.*

More Complex Tax Math: If Lower Brackets Excluded, Draconian Rate Hikes Required to Attempt to Bring USA Inc. Budget Into Financial Balance

Current Federal Income Tax Rates vs. Rates Needed to Reduce Deficit to 3% of GDP in 10 Years



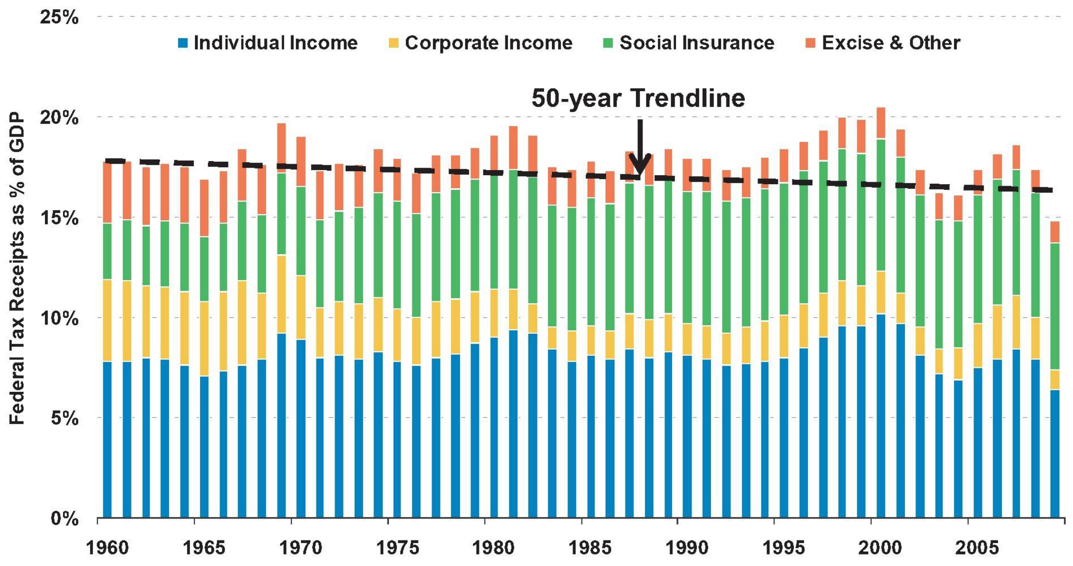
*Note: *The tax math presented here are pure mathematical illustrations – it is simply calculated to measure how much tax rates need to increase (for the top two income brackets) to achieve a deficit-to-GDP ratio of 3% by 2019E assuming a baseline budget path and relying on personal income tax rate hikes alone. These calculations are merely mechanical illustrations and are not meant to portray realistic solutions.*

Source: The Urban Institute (Desperately Seeking Revenue, By Altshuler, Lim and Williams, 1/5/2010.

Pros + Cons of Tax Rate Hikes

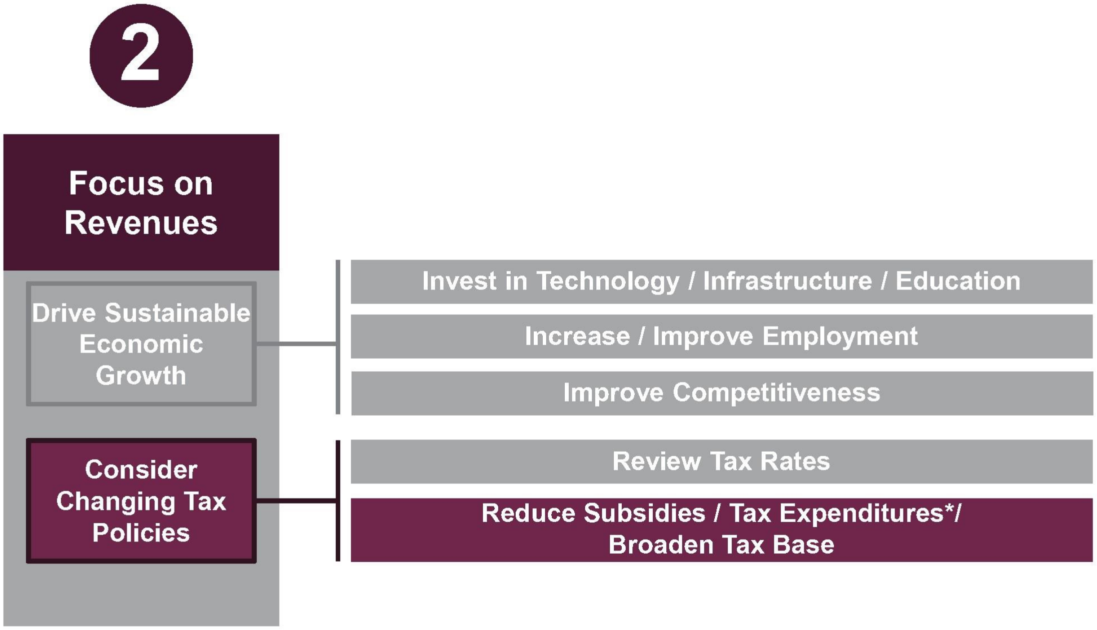
- A more progressive income tax system could lower tax burden from potential subsidy cuts and carbon taxes on the low-income population.
- Addressing income inequality may enhance perceived fairness – and political chances – of comprehensive deficit measures.
- Across-the-board tax rate increases would hurt nearly everyone, but especially lower-income taxpayers.
- Rate increases on upper brackets usually spur tax avoidance, and revenues often fall short of targets.
- Rate increases, which discourage savings, amplify distortions in the economy from tax subsidies, exclusions and tax expenditures, all of which encourage consumption.

Despite Multitudes of Tax Rate Changes, USA Inc.'s Tax Revenue as Percent of GDP Remained Roughly Stable at 15-20% from 1960-2002



Federal Tax Receipts by Category as % of GDP, 1960 - 2009

Source: White House OMB.



2

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Drive Sustainable Economic Growth

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Illustrating the Revenue Tradeoffs – Changing Tax Rates vs. Broadening the Tax Base

Mathematical Illustrations*

1) To eliminate F2010 deficits by increasing individual / corporate / payroll tax rates across-the-board would require +12 percentage points of tax rate increase (raising $1.4 trillion) – and would likely damage economic growth? *or*

2) To eliminate primary budget deficit** by F2019E by increasing top two tiers of income tax rates would require moving marginal rates to 72% / 77% from 33% / 35% – also likely to damage growth and encourage tax avoidance? *or*

3) Broadening tax base could require reducing 'tax expenditures' and subsidies, e.g., limiting deductions and subsidies for housing & healthcare?

Policy Options

1) A combination of somewhat higher rates and a broader tax base? *and/or*

2) Changing taxation of individual income to encourage saving / investment rather than consumption (perhaps a value-added tax and/or carbon tax)? *and/or*

3) Changing taxation of corporate income to reflect global competition?

*Note: *The simple tax math presented here are pure mathematical illustrations – we simply calculated how big a broad-based tax rate increase (for individual and corporate income, as well as payroll) would have to be for USA Inc. to financial break-even. These calculations are merely mechanical illustrations and are not meant to portray realistic solutions. **Primary budget deficit is the budget deficit excluding net interest payments.*

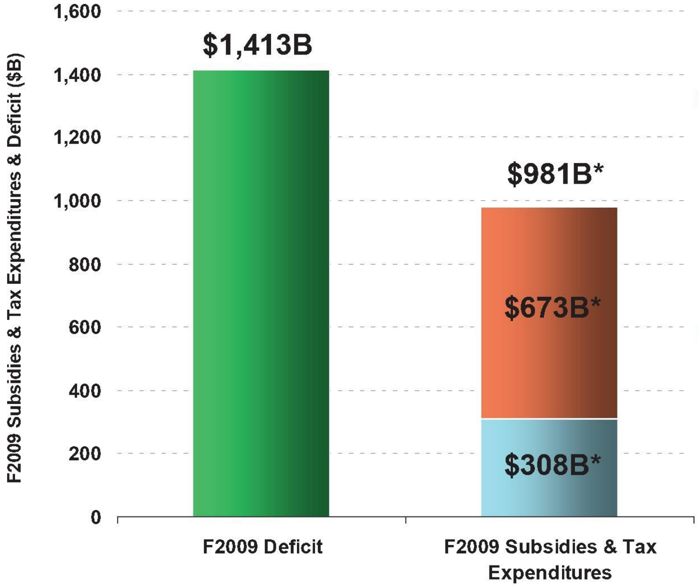
Changing USA Inc.'s Tax System Could Help Rebalance the Economy & Reallocate Resources

- **Though there would be adjustment costs, reducing subsidies and 'tax expenditures' could broaden the tax base and collect more revenue, while allowing income tax rates to stay low or go lower.**
- The current system favors consumption, penalizes saving; a tax based on consumption (or "value added") could offset some of that penalty, though there are risks and drawbacks.
- Subsidies create incentives to consume more health insurance and housing – both account for 20% of GDP, vs. 11% in 1965[1] – and take resources from other sectors like education, technology, infrastructure.
- A worldwide corporate tax system with a lower tax rate could reduce incentives for companies to keep income offshore.
- A carbon tax could raise some additional revenue to reduce the deficit, while encouraging sustainable economic development.

Source: 1) per BEA and CMS.

Changing Tax Policy to Broaden Tax Base: Subsidies + Tax Expenditures = 70% of USA Inc.'s Cash Flow Deficit

USA Inc.'s Deficit vs. Aggregate Subsidies and Tax Expenditures*, F2009



🟥 **Some tax expenditures favor consumption...**

Such as tax exemption on employer contributions to health insurance & deductibility of mortgage interest on owner-occupied homes…

🟦 **…But others favor saving, investment, and growth**

Such as tax exemptions / deductibility on capital gains / dividends / pension contributions & savings / accelerated depreciation of equipment…

*Note: *Each foregone revenue estimate assumes all other parts of the Tax Code remain unchanged during F2009. Aggregate tax subsidies presented here is simply the sum of individual estimates. In reality, the aggregate estimate would be different if tax subsidies were changed simultaneously because of potential interactions among provisions.*

Source: White House OMB, "Analytical Perspective – Budget of the U.S. Government, Fiscal Year 2011."

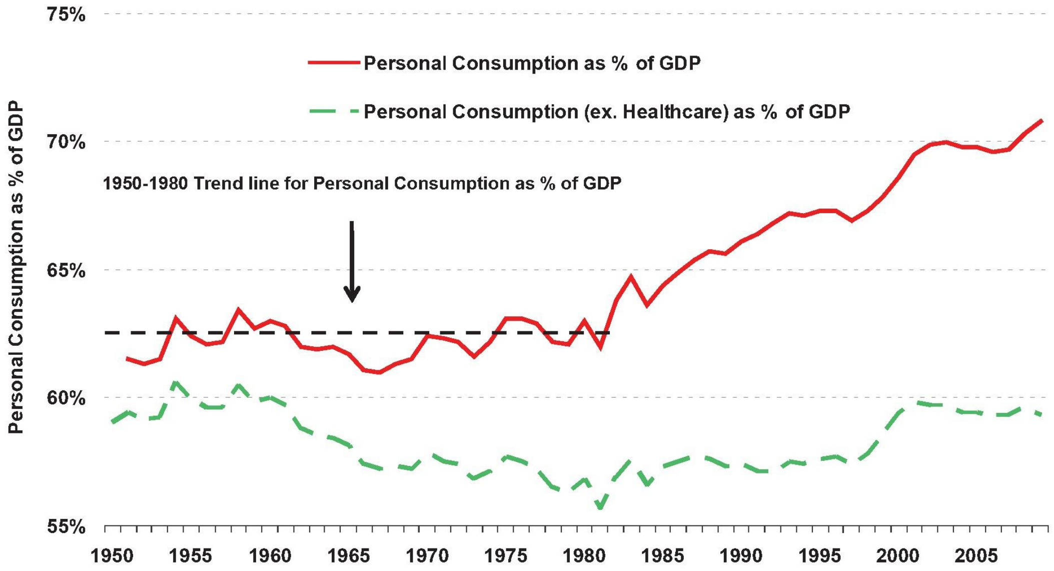
Raising Revenue by Reducing Tax Expenditures & Subsidies: Examples

- **Reducing the biggest tax expenditures and subsidies could net $1.7 trillion in additional revenue over the next decade, per CBO and the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget:**
  - **Reduce the tax exclusion for health insurance or replace with a credit**
  - **Cap the deduction for state and local taxes**
  - **Gradually reduce the mortgage interest deduction or change to a credit**
  - **Limit the tax benefit of other deductions, e.g., charitable contributions**
- **Some subsidies encourage saving or investment…and cutting them could mean short-term revenue gain but a net loss over time. Examples:**
  - **Favorable taxation of capital gains, dividends, and pension contributions**
  - **Exclude investment income from life insurance and annuities in taxable income**
  - **Accelerated depreciation or expensing of capital equipment outlays**

Source: Sources: Congressional Budget Office, Budget Options Volume 1: Health Care and Volume 2, 2009; Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, Let's Get Specific: Tax Expenditures (October 2010)

USA's Unbalanced Economy – Personal Consumption (Driven in Part by Healthcare) = 71% of GDP vs. 62% From 1950 To 1980…

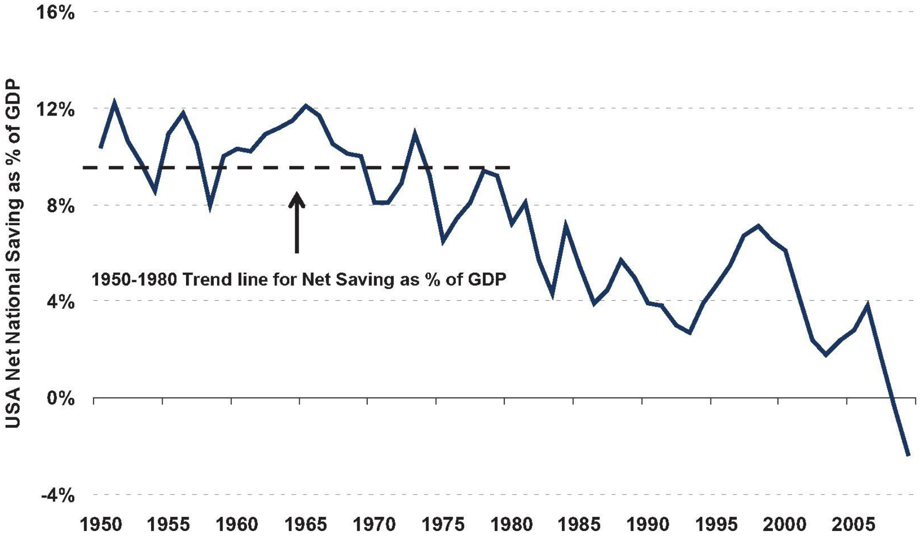
Personal Consumption as % of GDP, 1950 - 2009



Note: Personal consumption includes household consumption of all goods and services. Source: BEA, Federal Reserve.

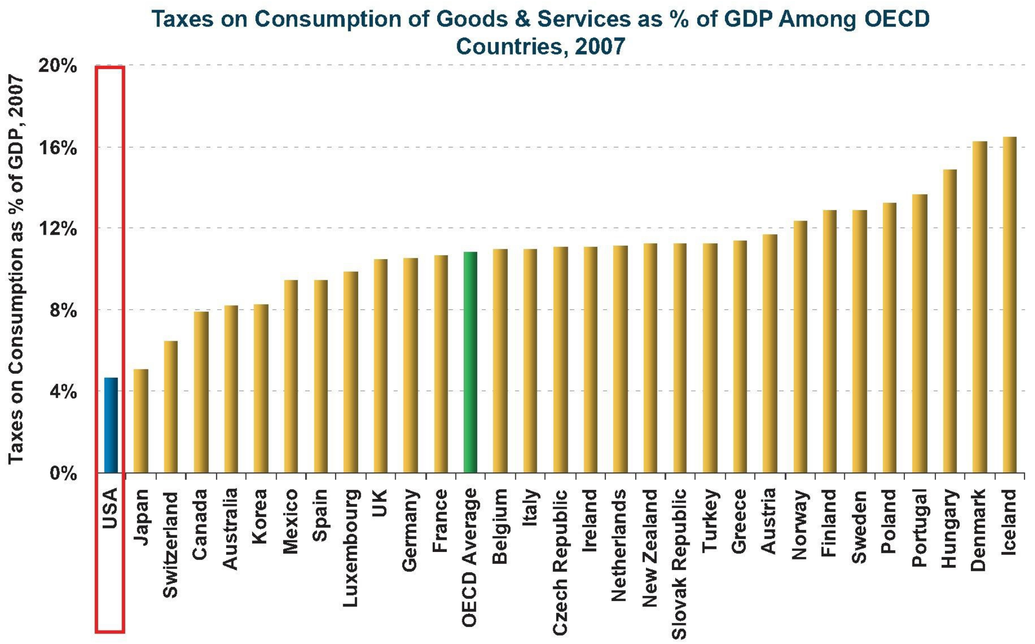
…USA's Unbalanced Economy – National Savings (Personal + Corporate + Government Savings) = -3% of GDP, vs. 10% From 1950 To 1980

USA Net Saving as % of GDP, 1950 - 2009



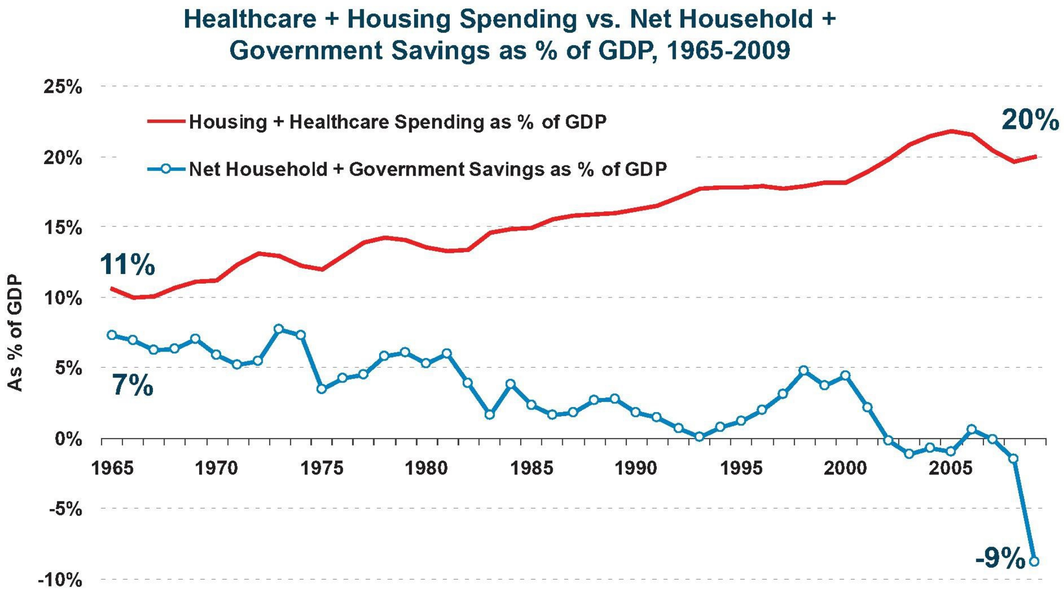
Note: National savings equal the aggregate savings by household, corporate and government sectors.
Source: BEA, Federal Reserve.

Current Tax Policies Help Spur Consumption – USA's Taxes on Consumption of Goods & Services Lowest Among Peers



Source: OECD, 2009 database.

America's Resources Allocated to Housing + Healthcare Nearly Doubled as a Percent of GDP Since 1965, While Household and Government Savings Fell Dramatically



Note: Housing includes purchase, rent and home improvement. Government savings occur when government runs a surplus.
Source: BEA, CMS via Haver Analytics.

USA Income Taxes Higher, Consumption Taxes Lower Than OECD Peers

Government Tax Revenue as % of GDP, USA vs. OECD Average, 2007

Tax Type	USA	OECD Average	Variance (USA – OECD)
Individual Income Taxes	10.8%	9.4%	1.4%
Property Taxes	3.1	1.9	1.2
Other	4.7	5.0	-0.3
Corporate Income Taxes	3.1	3.9	-0.8
Social Security Taxes	6.6	9.1	-2.5
Value Added Taxes	--	6.5	-6.5
Total	**28.3%**	**35.8%**	**-7.5%**

Source: OECD Tax Database.

Tax Policy Options From Report of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform

- Consolidate the tax code into three individual income rates (15% / 25% / 35%) and one corporate income rate (26%)
- Eliminate the complex tax codes such as AMT[1], PEP[2], and Pease[3]
- Triple standard deduction to $30,000 ($15,000 for individuals)
- Repeal state & local tax deduction and miscellaneous itemized deductions
- Limit mortgage deduction to exclude 2nd residences, home equity loans, and mortgages over $500,000
- Limit charitable deduction with floor at 2% of Adjusted Gross Income
- Cap income tax exclusion for employer-provided healthcare at the amount of the actuarial value of Federal Employees Health Benefits Plan (FEHBP) standard option
- Permanently extend the research tax credit for businesses
- Eliminate and modify several business tax expenditures (domestic production deduction / LIFO[4] method of accounting / energy tax preferences for the oil and gas industry / depreciation rules)
- International tax reform including a territorial system[5]

Note: 1) AMT is the Alternative Minimum Tax; 2) PEP is Personal Exemption Phase-out designed to eliminate personal income exemptions for high earners; 3) Pease is a similar phase-out, but instead of applying to personal exemption, it applies to most of the itemized deductions of a taxpayer's claims (mortgage interest, charitable gifts, state & local taxes paid, etc.); Pease is named after Representative Donald Pease (D-OH) who pushed for its enactment in 1990. 4) LIFO is 'Last In, First Out' which tend to reduce corporations' income taxes in times of inflation. 5) A territorial tax system is a tax system that taxes only income that is created within the borders of a specific territory (usually a country). Source: National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, "The Moment of Truth: Report of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform," 12/1/10. Note that the Report also identified two other scenarios called the 'The Zero Plan' which eliminates all tax expenditures and 'Tax Reform Trigger' which forces Congress to undertake comprehensive tax reform by 2012 by raising taxes for each year Congress fails to act.

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Consequences of Inaction

To Take a Step Back…

- **We Asked the Question**
  - How would public shareholders view USA Inc.?
- **What Have We Found?**
  - USA Inc.'s finances – short-term and long-term, income statement and balance sheet – are challenged. Management's policies have created incentives to invest in healthcare, housing, and current consumption rather than in productive capital, education, and technology – the tools needed to compete in the global marketplace.

Consequences of Inaction – Investor Perspective

- **Short Term, No Problem Yet**
  - Global bond investors, in part, have looked past USA Inc.'s deteriorating financials because growth, inflation, and Fed purchases matter more, and because income statements and balance sheets of many other developed countries (such as Greece / Spain / Portugal / Ireland) are worse.
- **Long Term, Consequences of Inaction Could Be Severe**
  - If USA Inc.'s "managers" and "board" continue to ignore rising unfunded entitlement spending, investors could eventually demand a higher return to lend money to USA Inc. – leading to rising bond yields / higher borrowing costs for USA Inc. At some point, USA Inc.'s currency could also weaken significantly.

Source: Richard Berner, "America's Fiscal Train Wreck" (7/2/2009), Morgan Stanley Research.

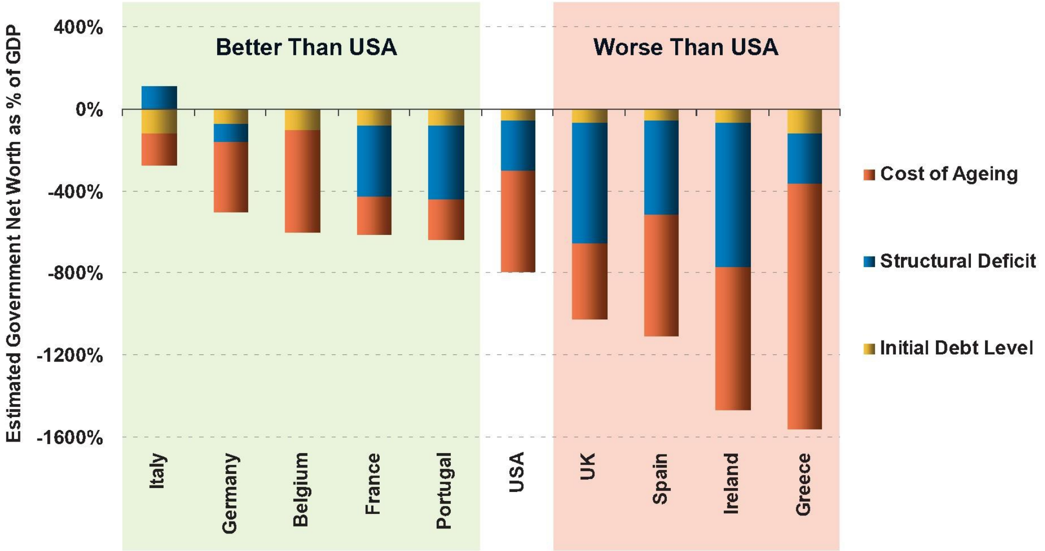
For Perspective, USA Inc.'s 55% Public Debt as % of GDP (2009) is in Middle of Pack When Compared with 'Top 25' Global Peers, Though Rising to 90% 'Warning' Level*

Rank	Country	2009 Net Debt Outstanding ($B)	Y/Y	As % of World Total	Net Debt as % of GDP			2009 GDP ($B)	Y/Y	As % of World Total	2009 Budget Surplus / Deficit ($B)	As % of World Gross Deficit	2009 Unemploy-ment Rate	Y/Y (pps)
					2009	2005	05-09 Change							
1	Japan	$9,149	12%	26%	181%	162%	19%	$5,049	-5%	9%	-960	33%	5%	+1
2	Italy	2,434	0	7	116	106	11	2,090	-5	4	-0	--	8	+1
3	Greece	374	8	1	111	99	12	338	-2	1	-27	1	9	+2
4	Belgium	454	0	1	98	92	6	461	-3	1	-1	0	8	+1
5	France	2,028	5	6	77	66	11	2,635	-2	5	-105	4	9	+2
6	Germany	2,423	1	7	75	68	7	3,235	-5	6	-16	1	7	+0
7	Austria	263	2	1	70	64	6	374	-4	1	-5	0	5	+1
8	India	854	-3	2	69	80	-12	1,243	6	2	31	--	--	--
9	UK	1,444	3	4	66	42	24	2,198	-5	4	-49	2	7	+2
10	Canada	870	-5	3	66	70	-4	1,319	-3	2	44	--	8	+2
11	Netherlands	503	-1	1	64	52	12	790	-4	1	4	--	4	+1
12	Argentina	178	-7	1	59	59	0	301	1	1	14	--	--	--
13	USA	7,811	23	23	55	37	17	14,266	-2	25	-1,438	50	9	+3
14	Poland	223	-11	1	53	47	6	423	2	1	26	--	--	--
15	Spain	757	20	2	53	43	10	1,438	-4	2	-125	4	18	+7
16	Norway	187	-17	1	51	45	6	369	-2	1	38	--	3	+1
17	Sweden	175	-5	1	44	51	-7	398	-4	1	9	--	8	+2
18	Brazil	650	-6	2	44	44	0	1,482	0	3	40	--	--	--
19	Switzerland	212	5	1	44	53	-9	484	-1	1	-10	0	4	+1
20	Denmark	125	7	0	40	38	3	308	-5	1	-8	0	3	+2
21	Turkey	219	-14	1	37	52	-15	594	-5	1	36	--	--	--
22	Australia	309	-3	1	34	36	-3	920	1	2	8	--	6	+1
23	Venezuela	95	11	0	27	27	0	353	-3	1	-9	0	--	--
24	China	609	7	2	13	18	-5	4,758	9	8	-38	1	--	--
25	Russia	92	-15	0	7	14	-7	1,255	-8	2	17	--	--	--
	Top 1-25	$32,438	0%	94%	55%	52%	3%	$47,081	-3%	81%	$2,790	97%	7%	+1
	Global	34,632	8	100	68	66	2	57,937	-2	100	2,885	100	7	+2

*Note: *Carmen Reinhart and Kenneth Rogoff observed from 3,700 historical annual data points from 44 countries that the relationship between government debt and real GDP growth is weak for debt/GDP ratios below a threshold of 90 percent of GDP. Above 90 percent, median growth rates fall by one percent, and average growth falls considerably more. . We note that while Reinhart and Rogoff's observations are based on 'gross debt' data, in the U.S., debt held by the public is closer to the European countries' definition of government gross debt. For more information, see Reinhart and Rogoff, "Growth in a Time of Debt," 1/10. Pps is percentage points. Source: IMF, Business Intelligence Monitor .*

On a Net Worth Basis, USA Inc. Also Sits in Middle of Pack vs. Western European Peer Governments

Illustrative Estimates* of Government Net Worth, 2009

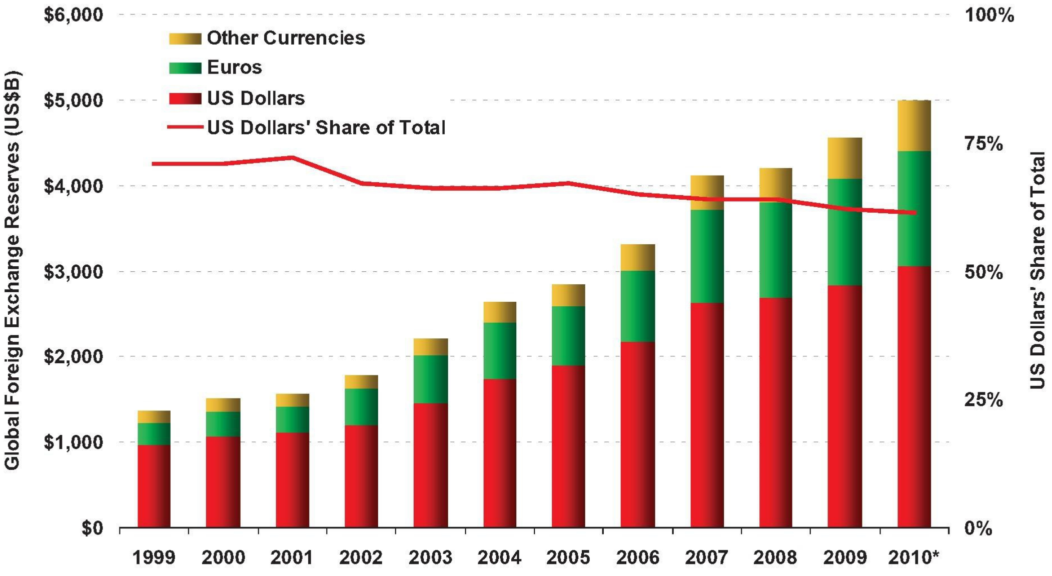


*Note: *Estimates of government net worth depends heavily on underlying assumptions such as projections for GDP, demographics, policy changes, etc. Net worth estimates may differ from U.S. Dept. of Treasury's data (used in earlier slides). For more details on underlying assumptions, please refer to Morgan Stanley Research's Global Outlook piece "Sovereign Subjects: Ask Not Whether Governments Will Default, But How," 8/25/10.*

Source: Arnaud Mares, Morgan Stanley Research.

Combined With US Dollar's Reserve Currency Status, Investors Still Prefer USA Inc.'s Debt, For Now

Global Aggregate Foreign Exchange Reserves by Currency, 1999 – 2010*



Note: 2010 data are preliminary and as of CQ3. Source: IMF.

However, in Longer Term, Credit Rating Agencies Have Begun to Worry About USA Inc.'s Debt Affordability

*On balance, we believe that the ratings of all large Aaa governments [including USA Inc.] remain well positioned, although their '**distance-to-downgrade' has in all cases substantially diminished**…Growth alone will not resolve an increasingly complicated debt equation…Preserving debt affordability at levels consistent with Aaa ratings will invariably require fiscal adjustments of a magnitude that, in some cases, will test social cohesion.* [1]

- Pierre Cailleteau

Managing Director of Sovereign Risk at Moody's, 3/16/2010

…if there are not offsetting measures to reverse the deterioration in negative fundamentals in the U.S., the likelihood of a negative outlook over the next two years will increase. [2]

Sarah Carlson,

Senior Analyst at Moody's, 1/14/2011

Sources: 1) Bloomberg, The New York Times*; 2)* The Wall Street Journal

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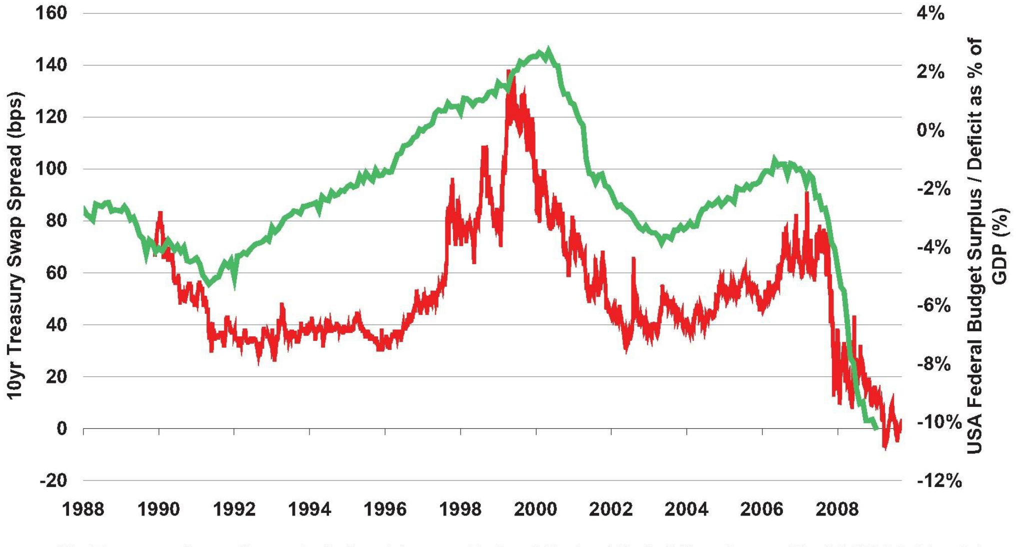
Treasury Swap Spread[1] Turned Negative For First Time in History[2] – Now Cheaper for Some Private Companies to Borrow than USA Government

10-Year Treasury Swap Spreads & Federal Budget Deficit / Surplus, 1988 – 2010



Note: 1) Treasury swap spread = Treasury yield – swap rate (between bonds of comparable maturity); swap rate is the fixed interest rate that the buyer demands in exchange for the uncertainty of paying the short-term LIBOR (floating) rate over time; swap rates are generally higher than Treasury yields with corresponding maturities as they include incremental credit risk associated with the banks that provide swaps compared to Treasuries, which are viewed as risk-free. 2)10-year Treasury swap spread turned negative on 3/24/10, while 30-year Treasury swap spread turned negative in 10/08 and shorter-term Treasury swap spreads are still positive. Source: Bloomberg.

Financial Challenges for Countries are Not Uncommon

Of course, there are no exact precedents for the financial challenges faced by America and many other countries in the world today.

Yet a quick overview of a few government and corporate financial crises may illustrate how managements have addressed – or failed to address – the problems of their day.

History Doesn't Repeat Itself, But It Often Rhymes[1] – What Can We Learn From These Credit Crises?

Sovereign Credit Crisis

2010 – Greece ($374B Debt Outstanding – 113% of GDP)

2009 – Dubai ($26B – 32% of GDP)

2001 – Argentina ($132B – 130% of GDP)

1998 – Russia ($73B – 27% of GDP)

State / Local Financial Woes

1975 – New York City ($14B* Debt Outstanding)

Corporate Bankruptcy

2009 – General Motors ($95B Debt Outstanding)

*Note: 1) Attributed to Mark Twain. *NYC government and subsidiaries had $14B debt outstanding in 1975. Adjusting for inflation, $14B of 1975 dollars would have been ~$50B in today's dollars. Source: sovereign data points per IMF and World Bank. NYC data point per California Research Bureau "Overview of New York City's Fiscal Crisis," 3/1/1995.*

Simple Pattern Recognition From Historical Debt Crisis Reveal Common Drivers (Leverage & Entitlements) + Triggers

	Year of Crisis	Debt Restructured		Long-Term Drivers	Short-Term Triggers	Key Stakeholders
		Amount	% of GDP			
Greece	2010	$374B	113%	Rising Underfunded Entitlement Spending	Financial Crisis	International Bond Investors
Dubai	2009	26B	32	Leveraged Construction / Real Estate Bubble	Financial Crisis	International Bond Investors
Argentina	2001	132B	130	Rising Underfunded Entitlement Spending + Currency Peg	Financial Crisis	International Bond Investors
Russia	1998	73B	27	Declining Productivity + Currency Peg	Financial Crisis	International Bond Investors
New York City	1975	14B[1]	--	Rising Underfunded Entitlement Spending	Recession	Bond Investors + Federal Government

Note: 1) NYC government and subsidiaries had $14B debt outstanding in 1975. Adjusting for inflation, $14B of 1975 dollars would have been ~$50B in today's dollars. Source: sovereign data points per IMF and World Bank. NYC data point per California Research Bureau "Overview of New York City's Fiscal Crisis," 3/1/1995.

Lessons Learned: Historical Debt Crisis

- **Rising Unfunded Entitlement Spending = Often a Long-Term Driver of Debt Crisis**
  - Countries such as Greece / Argentina and cities such as New York all nearly brought down by unfunded entitlement spending.
- **Financial Crisis / Economic Downturn = Often the Short-Term Trigger of Debt Crisis**
  - All cases had similar short-term triggers.
- **External Forces = Often Key Stakeholders in Crisis & Driving Ensuing Changes**
  - Most sovereign credit crises + ensuing reforms were driven by loss of confidence of international bond investors.
  - New York City's near default was driven by demands from bond holders + refusal of bailout from federal government.

While High Government Debt Levels Could Hasten Economic Recovery Post Recession, There Are Many Long-Term Negative Consequences

- **Crowding Out Investment ➔ Lower Output & Income**
  - A growing portion of people's savings would be diverted to purchase government debt rather than toward investment in productive capital goods.
- **Higher Interest Payments ➔ Higher Tax Rates & Lower Output & Income**
  - Government may be forced to raise marginal tax rates and / or reduce spending on other programs to meet interest payments.
- **Reduced Ability to Borrow ➔ Less Policy Flexibility**
  - In case of economic downturns or international crises, government may not be able to raise substantially more debt.
- **Increased Chance of Sudden Fiscal Crisis ➔ Social / Economic Disruption**
  - Investors may lose confidence in government's ability to repay debt & interest without causing inflation.

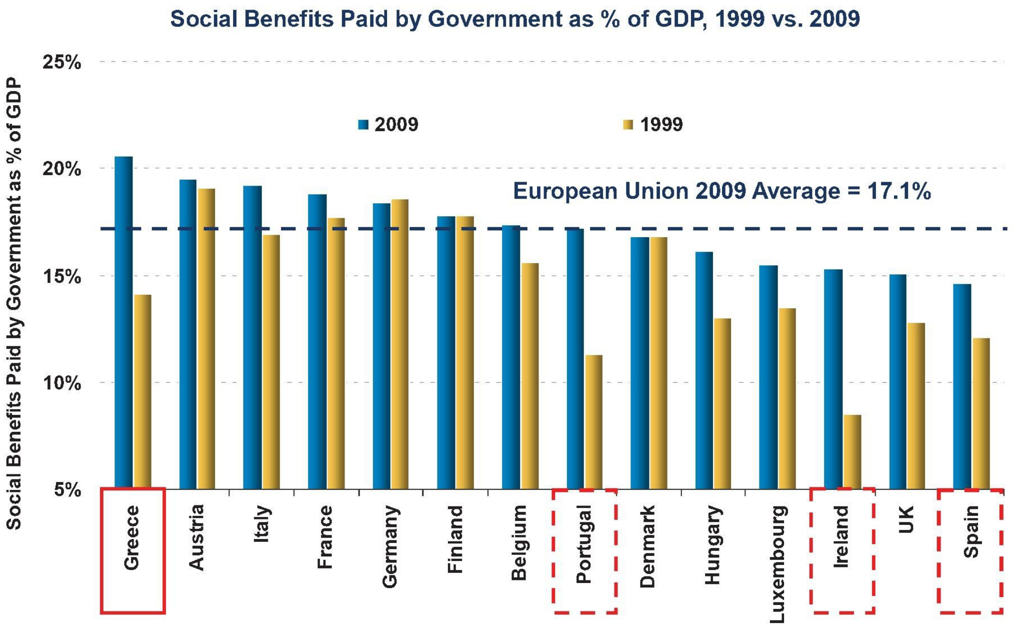
Source: Congressional Budget Office, "Federal Debt and the Risk of a Fiscal Crisis." 7/10.

Lessons Learned: For Countries Burdened by High Debt Levels, Austerity Measures are Necessary

	2009 Deficit as % of GDP	Gross Debt as % of GDP	2009-2010 Austerity Measures	New Revenue Streams
Greece	**14%**	113%	• Wage freeze & bonus cut of 14% on all public sector employees • Reduction in government contract workers • 11% reduction in pensions & Increase in retirement age to 65 from 58	• Joint IMF–EU bailout of $146B • Tax increases for VAT (+2%) / fuel / alcohol / cigarette (+10%) • Clamp down on tax evasion
Ireland	**11%**	66%	• 5-15% pay cut & 4% benefit reduction for all public sector employees • $1.5B+ broad spending cuts in healthcare & infrastructure	• Carbon tax on fuel • 1% tax rise on personal income about 120K euros
Spain	**11%**	54%	• Hiring freeze for public sectors • Increase of retirement age to 67 from 60 • Total budget cut of $70B 10-13E	• Sold $7B in new bonds
Portugal	**9%**	78%	• Wage freeze on all public sector employees • Reduce state payroll via attrition	• 50% bonus tax on top bank executives • Privatize state-owned industries

Source: Eurostat, European Commission, IMF, New York Times, Financial Times, BBC, Wall Street Journal.

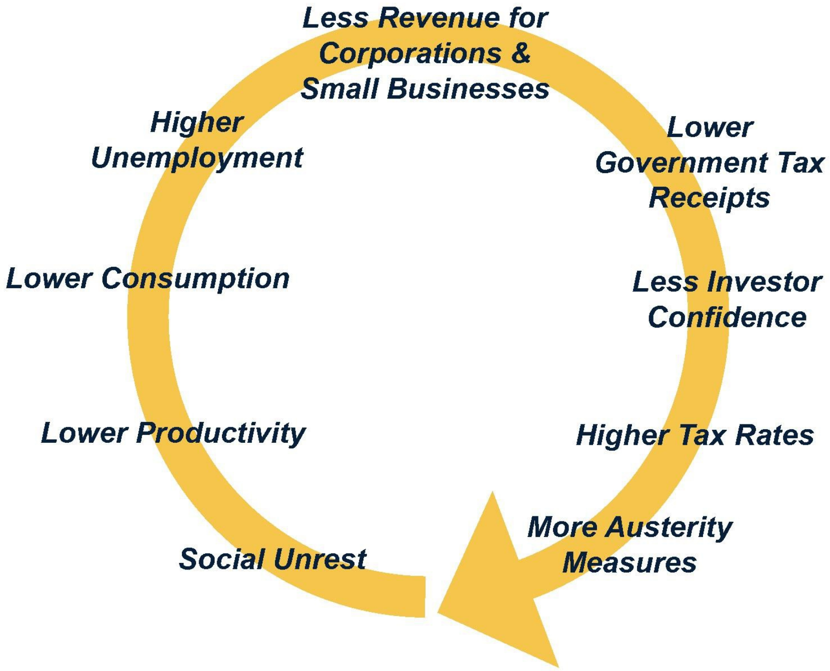
European Countries (including Greece, Portugal, Ireland and Spain) Have Committed A Rising Share of GDP to 'Social Benefits' Over Past Decade



Social Benefits Paid by Government as % of GDP, 1999 vs. 2009

Source: Eurostat. 'Social Benefits' include both social insurance (comparable to Social Security and Medicare) and social assistance benefits (comparable to Medicaid) provided by government units as well as all social insurance benefits provided under private funded and unfunded social insurance schemes, whether in cash or in kind.

Austerity Measures to Take Away Entitlement Benefits Could Spark a Vicious Cycle



Less Revenue for Corporations & Small Businesses

Lower Government Tax Receipts

Less Investor Confidence

Higher Tax Rates

More Austerity Measures

Social Unrest

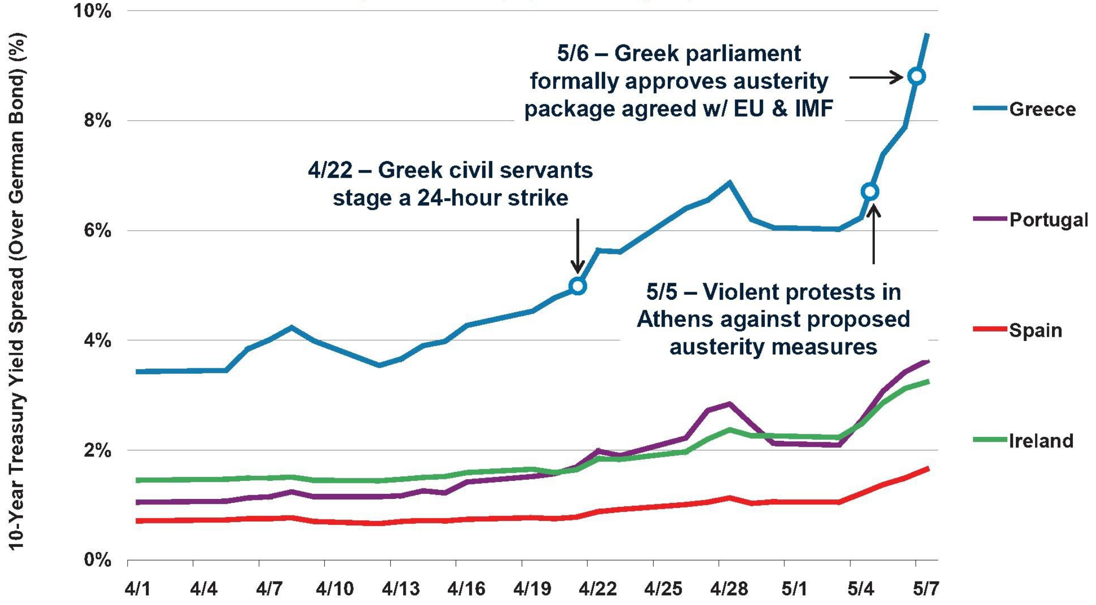
Lower Productivity

Lower Consumption

Higher Unemployment

Social Unrest Can Shake Investor Confidence And Contagion Can Spread

10-Year Sovereign Yield Spread (over German Bonds) for Greece / Portugal / Spain / Ireland, April 1 – May 10, 2010



5/6 – Greek parliament formally approves austerity package agreed w/ EU & IMF

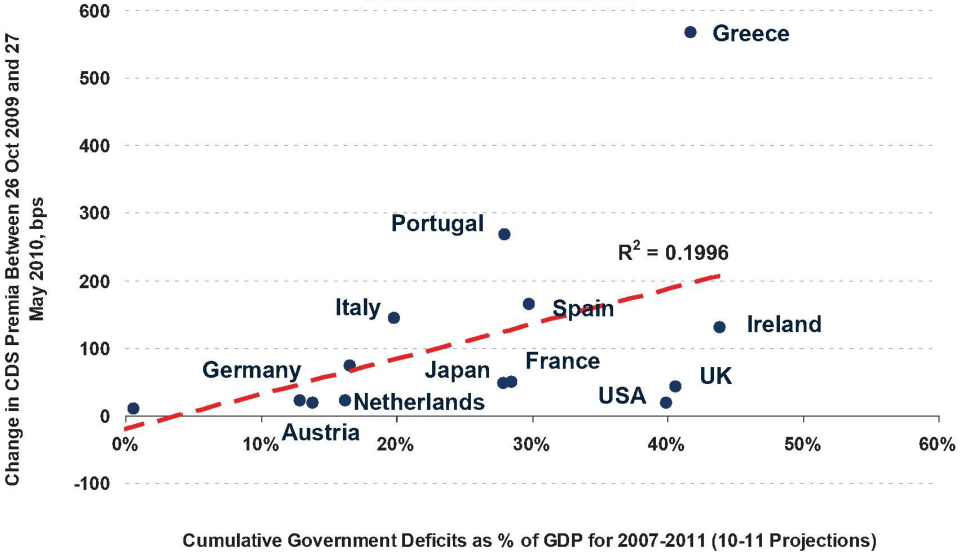
4/22 – Greek civil servants stage a 24-hour strike

5/5 – Violent protests in Athens against proposed austerity measures

Source: FactSet.

Government Deficits and Changes in Sovereign Credit Default Swap Rates = Positively Correlated

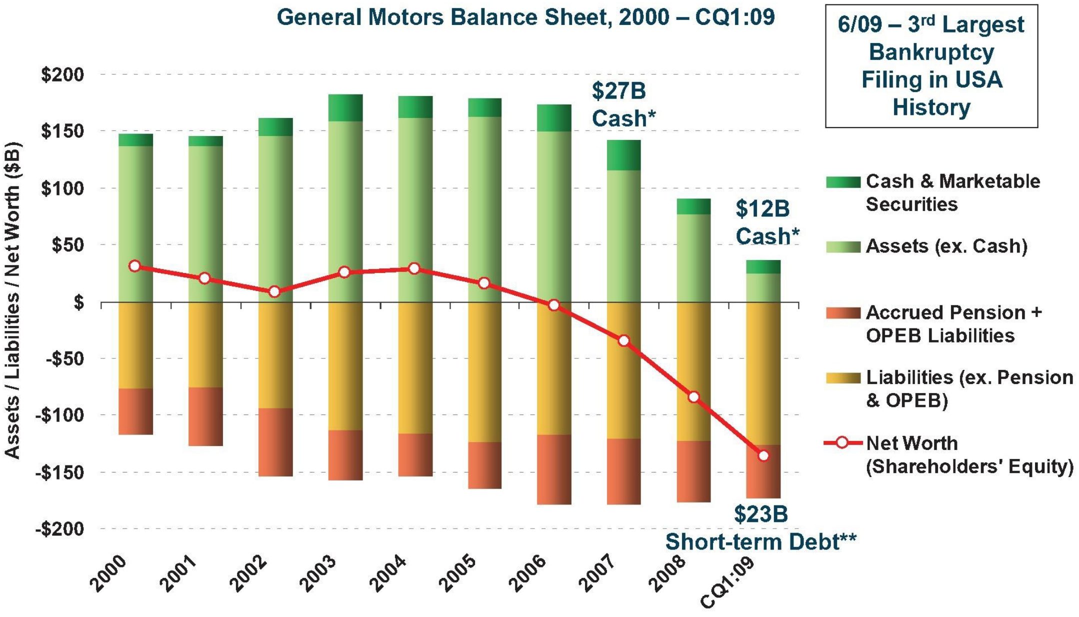
Cumulative Government Deficits as % of GDP vs. Change in Sovereign CDS between 2007 and 2011E



Sources: OECD; Markit; National Data

When Corporations Like General Motors Run Out of Cash, Eventually They File for Bankruptcy

General Motors Balance Sheet, 2000 – CQ1:09



$27B Cash*

$12B Cash*

$23B Short-term Debt**

6/09 – 3rd Largest Bankruptcy Filing in USA History

*Note: *Includes cash & equivalents, as well as marketable securities; **short-term debt also includes current portion of long-term debt. Source: General Motors.*

General Motors –
Entitlement Spending Became Too Onerous for this Great American Company

1908 – Founded in Flint, Michigan to manufacture automobiles

1954 – Shipped 50 millionth automobile

1988 – Free cash flow peaked at $6.3B

1999 – Reached a peak market capitalization of $61B

2006 – Revenue peaked at $207B

2009 – Filed for bankruptcy

Why did GM file for bankruptcy?

Products became increasingly uncompetitive. In addition, pension plans to support 650,000 retirees and their dependents (compared with 80,000 active employees in N. America as of 2010) rose to 4.8% of GM's annual expenses and $4,679 in annual pension payments per worker to former workers.

Source: General Motors, FactSet, DataStream, History News Network.

Comparing GM & USA, Inc…

	USA 2010	General Motors 2008	
Gross Debt as % of GDP	**93%**	**82%**	**Gross Debt as % of Revenue[1]**
Federal Spending as % of GDP	**24**	**114**	**Total Cost as % of Revenue**
Federal Budget Surplus as % of GDP	**-9**	**-21**	**Net Income as % of Revenue**
Interest Payments as % of GDP	**1**	**2**	**Interest Payments as % of Revenue**
% of Citizens Receiving Government Subsidy or on Government Payroll	**36**	**75**	**% of Total GM Population[2] Dependent on the company**

Note: 1) Gross debt of GM calculated as total liabilities – future OPEB & pension liabilities, as these liabilities are not reflected in USA gross debt. 2) % of total GM population dependent on the company = all living retirees / (living retirees + current workers). Source: White House Office of Management and Budget, OECD, Heritage Foundation, General Motors.

…Good News for GM Is It Has 'Taken Its Medicine' and Has Begun to Implement a Successful Turnaround

Basic Framework of GM Turnaround:

- **Focus on Expenses**
  - Eliminated some of the legacy entitlements - swapped employee healthcare for equity ownership.
  - Significantly changed operating efficiency - took out costs so that GM was able to operate at breakeven at bottom of the cycle and turn cash flow positive during other parts of its business cycle.
- **Focus on Revenue**
  - Changed business model to move away from lowering cost to improving vehicle quality, engineering and styling.

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Summary

Highlights from F2010 USA Inc. Financials

- **Summary –** USA Inc. has challenges.
- **Cash Flow –** While recession depressed F2008-F2010 results, cash flow has been negative for 9 consecutive years ($4.8 trillion, cumulative), with no end to losses in sight. Negative cash flow implies that USA Inc. can't afford the services it is providing to 'customers,' many of whom are people with few alternatives.
- **Balance Sheet –** Net worth is negative and deteriorating.
- **Off-Balance Sheet Liabilities –** Off-balance sheet liabilities of at least $31 trillion (primarily unfunded Medicare and Social Security obligations) amount to nearly $3 for every $1 of debt on the books. Just as unfunded corporate pensions and other post-employment benefits (OPEB) weigh on public corporations, unfunded entitlements, over time, may increase USA Inc.'s cost of capital. And today's off-balance sheet liabilities will be tomorrow's on-balance sheet debt.
- **Conclusion –** Publicly traded companies with similar financial trends would be pressed by shareholders to pursue a turnaround. The good news: USA Inc.'s underlying asset base and entrepreneurial culture are strong. The financial trends can shift toward a positive direction, but both 'management' and 'shareholders' will need collective focus, willpower, commitment, and sacrifice.

Note: USA federal fiscal year ends in September; Cash flow = total revenue – total spending on a cash basis; net worth includes unfunded future liabilities from Social Security and Medicare on an accrual basis over the next 75 years. Source: cash flow per White House Office of Management and Budget; net worth per Dept. of Treasury, "2010 Financial Report of the U.S. Government," adjusted to include unfunded liabilities of Social Security and Medicare.

Drilldown on USA Inc. Financials…

- **To analysts looking at USA Inc. as a public corporation, the financials are challenged**
  - Excluding Medicare / Medicaid spending and one-time charges, USA Inc. has supported a 4% average net margin[1] over 15 years, but cash flow is deep in the red by negative $1.3 trillion last year (or -$11,000 per household), and net worth[2] is negative $44 trillion (or -$371,000 per household).
- **The main culprits: entitlement programs, mounting debt, and one-time charges**
  - Since the Great Depression, USA Inc. has steadily added "business lines" and, with the best of intentions, created various entitlement programs. Some of these serve the nation's poorest, whose struggles have been made worse by the financial crisis. Apart from Social Security and unemployment insurance, however, funding for these programs has been woefully inadequate – and getting worse.
  - Entitlement expenses (adjusted for inflation) rose 70% over the last 15 years, and USA Inc. entitlement spending now equals $16,600 per household per year; annual spending exceeds dedicated funding by more than $1 trillion (and rising). Net debt levels are approaching warning levels, and one-time charges only compound the problem.
  - Some consider defense spending a major cause of USA Inc.'s financial dilemma. Re-setting priorities and streamlining could yield savings – $788 billion by 2018, according to one recent study[3] – perhaps without damaging security. But entitlement spending has a bigger impact on USA Inc. financials. Although defense nearly doubled in the last decade, to 5% of GDP, it is still below its 7% share of GDP from 1948 to 2000. It accounted for 20% of the budget in 2010, but 41% of all government spending between 1789 and 1930.

Note: 1) Net margin defined as net income divided by total revenue; 2) net worth defined as assets (ex. stewardship assets like national parks and heritage assets like the Washington Monument) minus liabilities minus the net present value of unfunded entitlements (such as Social Security and Medicare), data per Treasury Dept.'s "2010 Annual Report on the U.S. Government"; 3) Gordon Adams and Matthew Leatherman, "A Leaner and Meaner National Defense," Foreign Affairs, *Jan/Feb 2011)*

…Drilldown on USA Inc. Financials…

- **Medicare and Medicaid, largely underfunded (based on 'dedicated' revenue) and growing rapidly, accounted for 21% (or $724B) of USA Inc.'s total expenses in F2010, up from 5% forty years ago**
  - Together, these two programs represent 35% of all (annual) US healthcare spending; Federal Medicaid spending has doubled in real terms over the last decade, to $273 billion annually.
- **Total government healthcare spending consumes 8.2% of GDP compared with just 1.3% fifty years ago; the new health reform law could increase USA Inc.'s budget deficit**
  - As government healthcare spending expands, USA Inc.'s red ink will get much worse if healthcare costs continue growing 2 percentage points faster than per capita income (as they have for 40 years).
- **Unemployment Insurance and Social Security are adequately funded...for now. The future, not so bright**
  - Demographic trends have exacerbated the funding problems for Medicare and Social Security – of the 102 million increased enrollment between 1965 and 2009, 42 million (or 41%) is due to an aging population. With a 26% longer life expectancy but a 3% increase in retirement age (since Social Security was created in 1935), deficits from Social Security could add $11.6 trillion (or 140%) to the public debt by 2037E, per Congressional Budget Office (CBO).

…Drilldown on USA Inc. Financials

- **If entitlement programs are not reformed, USA Inc.'s balance sheet will go from bad to worse**
  - Public debt has doubled over the last 30 years, to 62% of GDP. This ratio is expected to surpass the 90% threshold* – above which real GDP growth could slow considerably – in 10 years and could near 150% of GDP in 20 years if entitlement expenses continue to soar, per CBO.
  - As government healthcare spending expands, USA Inc.'s red ink will get much worse if healthcare costs continue growing 2 percentage points faster than per capita income (as they have for 40 years).
- **The turning point: Within 15 years (by 2025), entitlements plus net interest expenses will absorb all – yes, all – of USA Inc.'s annual revenue, per CBO**
  - That would require USA Inc. to borrow funds for defense, education, infrastructure, and R&D spending, which today account for 32% of USA Inc. spending (excluding one-time items), down dramatically from 69% forty years ago.
  - It's notable that CBO's projection from 10 years ago (in 1999) showed Federal revenue sufficient to support entitlement spending + interest payments until 2060E – 35 years later than current projection.

*Note: *Carmen Reinhart and Kenneth Rogoff observed from 3,700 historical annual data points from 44 countries that the relationship between government debt and real GDP growth is weak for debt/GDP ratios below a threshold of 90 percent of GDP. Above 90 percent, median growth rates fall by one percent, and average growth falls considerably more. We note that while Reinhart and Rogoff's observations are based on 'gross debt' data, in the U.S., debt held by the public is closer to the European countries' definition of government gross debt. For more information, see Reinhart and Rogoff, "Growth in a Time of Debt," 1/10.*

How Might One Think About Turning Around USA Inc.?...

- **Key focus areas would likely be reducing USA Inc.'s budget deficit and improving / restructuring the 'business model'…**
  - One would likely drill down on USA Inc.'s key revenue and expense drivers, then develop a basic analytical framework for 'normal' revenue / expenses, then compare options.

  Looking at history…

  - Annual growth in revenue of 3% has been roughly in line with GDP for 40 years* while corporate income taxes grew at 2%. Social insurance taxes (for Social Security / Medicare) grew 5% annually and now represent 37% of USA Inc. revenue, compared with 19% in 1965.
  - Annual growth in expenses of 3% has been roughly in line with revenue, but entitlements are up 5% per annum - and now absorb 51% of all USA Inc.'s expense - more than twice their share in 1965; defense and other discretionary spending growth has been just 1-2%.

  One might ask…

  - Should expense and revenue levels be re-thought and re-set so USA Inc. operates near break-even and expense growth (with needed puts and takes) matches GDP growth, thus adopting a 'don't spend more than you earn' approach to managing USA Inc.'s financials?

*Note: *We chose a 40-year period from 1965 to 2005 to examine 'normal' levels of revenue and expenses. We did not choose the most recent 40-year period (1969 to 2009) as USA was in deep recession in 2008 / 2009 and underwent significant tax policy fluctuations in 1968 /1969, so many metrics (like individual income and corporate profit) varied significantly from 'normal' levels.*

…How Might One Think About Turning Around USA Inc.?

One might consider…

- **Options for reducing expenses by focusing on entitlement reform and operating efficiency**
  - Formula changes could help Social Security's underfunding, but look too draconian for Medicare/Medicaid; the underlying healthcare cost dilemma requires business process restructuring and realigned incentives.
  - Resuming the 20-year trend line for lower Federal civilian employment, plus more flexible compensation systems and selective local outsourcing, could help streamline USA Inc.'s operations.
- **Options for increasing revenue by focusing on driving long-term GDP growth and changing tax policies**
  - USA Inc. should examine ways to invest in growth that provides a high return (ROI) via new investment in technology, education, and infrastructure and could stimulate productivity gains and employment growth.
  - Reducing tax subsidies (like exemptions on mortgage interest payments or healthcare benefits) and changing the tax system in other ways could increase USA Inc.'s revenue without raising income taxes to punitive – and self-defeating – levels. Such tax policy changes could help re-balance USA's economy between consumption and savings and re-orient business lines towards investment-led growth, though there are potential risks and drawbacks.
- **History suggests the long-term consequences of inaction could be severe**
  - USA Inc. has many assets, but it must start addressing its spending/debt challenges now.

Sizing Costs Related to USA Inc.'s Key Financial Challenges & Potential AND / OR Solutions

- **To create frameworks for discussion, the next slide summarizes USA Inc.'s various financial challenges and the projected future cost of each main expense driver.**
  - The estimated future cost is calculated as the net present value of expected 'dedicated' future income (such as payroll taxes) minus expected future expenses (such as benefits paid) over the next 75 years.
- **Then we ask the question: 'What can we do to solve these financial challenges?'**
  - The potential solutions include a range of simple *mathematical illustrations* (such as changing program characteristics or increasing tax rates) and/or *program-specific policy solutions* proposed or considered by lawmakers and agencies like the CBO (such as indexing Social Security initial benefits to growth in cost of living).
- **These mathematical illustrations are only a mechanical answer to key financial challenges and not realistic solutions. In reality, a combination of detailed policy changes will likely be required to bridge the future funding gap.**

Overview of USA Inc.'s Key Financial Challenges & Potential and/or Solutions

Rank	Financial Challenge	Net Present Cost[1] ($T / % of 2010 GDP)	Mathematical Illustrations and/or Potential Policy Solutions[2]
1	Medicaid	\$35 Trillion[3] / 239%	• Isolate and address the drivers of medical cost inflation • Improve efficiency / productivity of healthcare system • Reduce coverage for optional benefits & optional enrollees
2	Medicare	\$23 Trillion / 156%	• Reduce benefits • Increase Medicare tax rate • Isolate and address the drivers of medical cost inflation • Improve efficiency / productivity of healthcare system
3	Social Security	\$8 Trillion / 54%	• Raise retirement age • Reduce benefits • Increase Social Security tax rate • Reduce future initial benefits by indexing to cost of living growth rather than wage growth • Subject benefits to means test to determine eligibility
4	Slow GDP / USA Revenue Growth	--	• Invest in technology / infrastructure / education • Remove tax & regulatory uncertainties to stimulate employment growth • Reduce subsidies and tax expenditures & broaden tax base
5	Government Inefficiencies	--	• Resume the 20-year trend line for lower Federal civilian employment • Implement more flexible compensation systems • Consolidate / selectively local outsource certain functions

Note: 1) Net Present Cost is calculated as the present value of expected future net liabilities (expected revenue minus expected costs) for each program / issue over the next 75 years, Medicare estimate per Dept. of Treasury, "2010 Financial Report of the U.S. Government," Social Security estimate per Social Security Trustees' Report (8/10). 2) For more details on potential solutions, see slides 252-410 or full USA Inc. presentation. 3) Medicaid does not have dedicated revenue source and its \$35T net present cost excludes funding from general tax revenue, NPV analysis based on 3% discount rate applied to CBO's projection for annual inflation-adjusted expenses.

The Essence of America's Financial Conundrum & Math Problem?

While a hefty 80% of Americans indicate balancing the budget should be one of the country's top priorities, per a Peter G. Peterson Foundation survey in 11/09…

…only 12% of Americans support cutting spending on Medicare or Social Security, per a Pew Research Center survey, 2/11.

Some might call this 'having your cake and eating it too…'

The Challenge Before Us

Policymakers, businesses and citizens need to share responsibility for past failures and develop a plan for future successes.

Past generations of Americans have responded to major challenges with collective sacrifice and hard work.

Will ours also rise to the occasion?

Current Observations About America…

- **On many fronts, USA Inc. is in great shape, but it has one big problem – USA Inc. spends too much and, in effect, is maxing out its credit card. USA Inc. must address the problem.**
- In 2009, 64% of America's revenue went to Social Security, Medicare & Medicaid, compared with 31% in 1980 and 20% in 1970.
- Using current projections, 100% of America's revenue in 2025 will go to Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and Net Interest Expense.
- This raises the question, 'How will America pay for the likes of education, national defense, homeland security, infrastructure improvement, R&D, law enforcement, postal service, etc.?'
- **USA Inc.'s fundamental tradeoff is that it must balance its FUTURE (education) with its PRESENT (national defense & homeland security) and its PAST (Social Security & Medicare & Medicaid).**

Source: 2009 data per White House OMB, 2025 forecast per CBO's Alternative Fiscal Scenario.

…Current Observations About America

- **It's Time to Rise to the Occasion, It's America's Tradition…**
- The essence of the 'American dream' is about the underdog succeeding / the turnaround story…every generation or so has an opportunity to rise to an occasion (and sacrifice) and show why America (and its democratic form of government) are great. For this generation, the biggest challenge may be staving off financial hardship.
- **Collective Sacrifice and Hard Work are the Two Inter-Related Ways out of USA Inc.'s Problems…**

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Appendix

Appendix

Additional Datapoints on Federal Debt

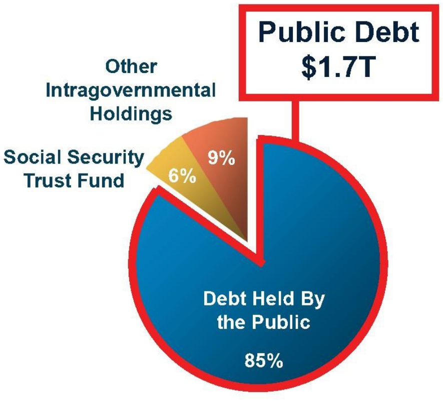
Federal Debt Held by the Public vs. Gross Debt

- **Federal Debt Held by the Public ($9 Trillion Outstanding, 62% of GDP in 2010)**
  - Value of all federal securities sold to the public that are still outstanding.
  - Represents the cumulative effect of past federal borrowing on **today**’s economy and on the **current** federal budget.
  - Net interest payments represent a burden on **current** taxpayers.
- **Gross Debt ($14 Trillion Outstanding, 94% of GDP in 2010)**
  - Public debt + intragovernmental debt (related to entities including the Social Security Trust Fund and federal employee / veterans’ pension fund) + net liability of GSEs (related to likes of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac).
  - Represents a claim on both **current** and **future** resources.
- **We Focus on Public Debt Levels**
  - Public debt is the base for calculating net interest payments.
  - Gross debt level could be misleading (to take an extreme example, simply eliminating all trust funds without changing promised benefits for the associated programs would dramatically reduce gross debt from 94% of GDP to 62% of GDP without improving long-term fiscal outlook at all*).
  - In the future, when intragovernmental debt + net liability of GSEs begin demanding repayments, it is likely financed via material increases in public debt levels.

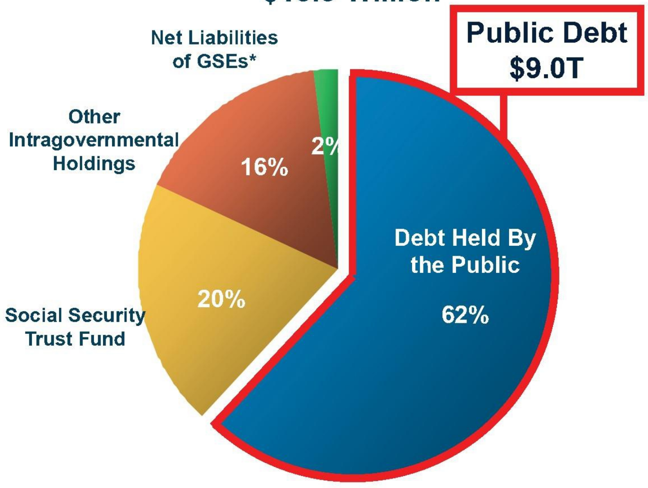
*Note: *for more details, see James R. Horney, “Recommendation That President’s Fiscal Commission Focus on Gross Debt is Misguided,” 5/27/10. Data source: White House OMB, CBO.*

Public Debt = Gross Debt – Intra-Governmental Holdings – Net Liabilities of Government-Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs)

1960
Real Gross Debt Outstanding =
$2.0 Trillion

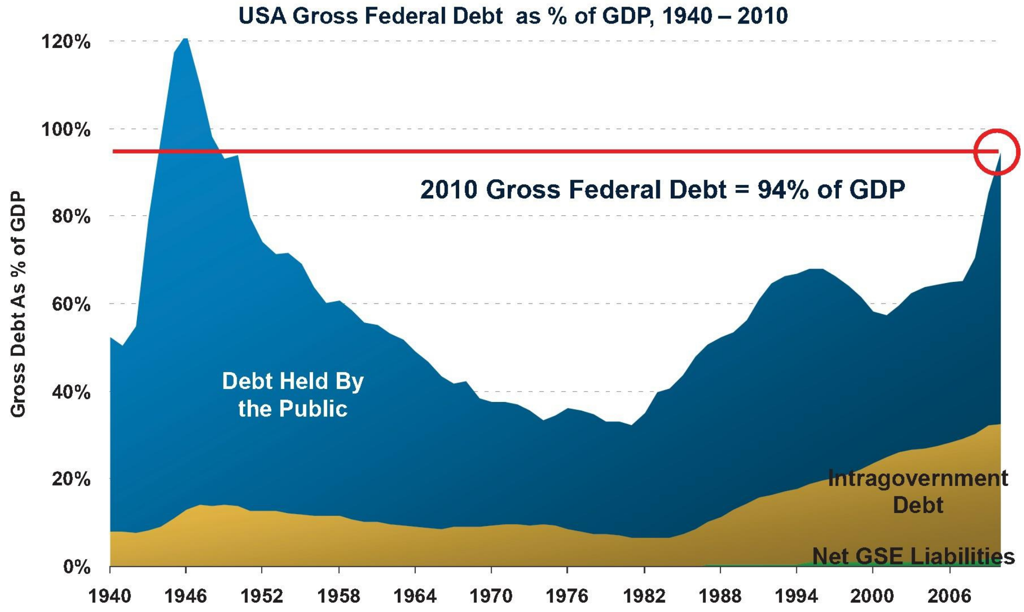


2010
Real Gross Debt Outstanding =
$13.5 Trillion



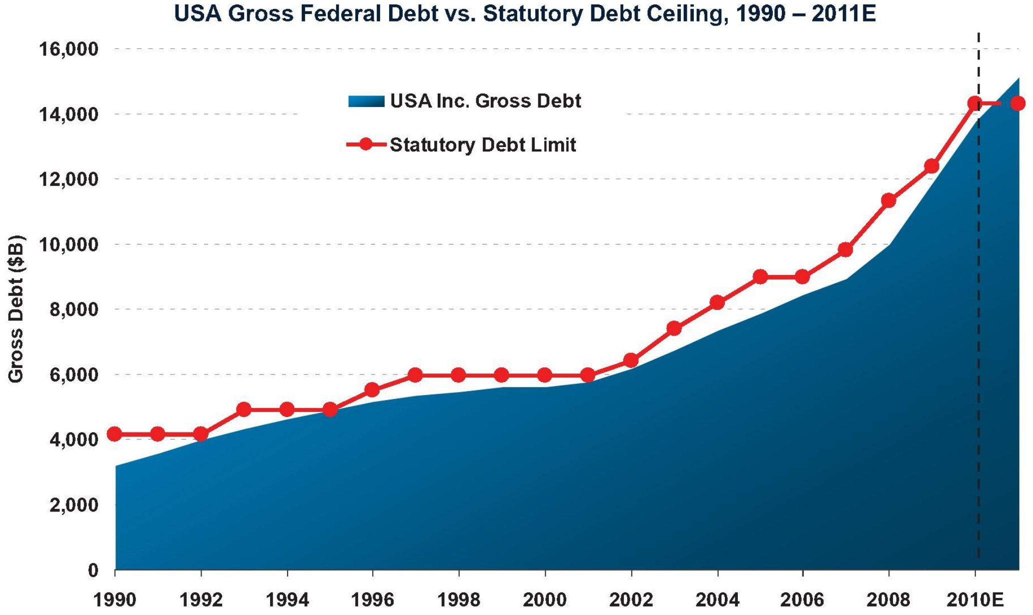
Note: Data are inflation adjusted. Net liabilities of GSEs assumes 50% loss ratio on $250B delinquent loans held by Fannie Mae / Freddie Mac. Data source: Dept. of Treasury, White House Office of Management and Budget.*

Gross Debt Level = Approaching 100% of GDP


USA Gross Federal Debt as % of GDP, 1940 – 2010

Source: White House OMB.

Gross Debt Level = Would Exceed Current Statutory Limit of $1.43T* Within One Year


USA Gross Federal Debt vs. Statutory Debt Ceiling, 1990 – 2011E

*Note: * As of 1/11. Source: White House OMB.*

‘Top 75’ Countries Ranked by **Net Debt as % of GDP**…

					Net Debt as % of GDP									
Rank	Country	2009 Net Debt Outstanding ($B)	Y/Y	As % of World Total	2009	2005	05-09 Change	2009 GDP ($B)	Y/Y	As % of World Total	2009 Budget Surplus / Deficit ($B)	As % of World Gross Deficit	2009 Unemploy-ment Rate	Y/Y (pps)
1	Zimbabwe	$7	13%	0%	190%	–	--	$4	4%	0%	-$1	0%	--	--
2	**Japan**	**9,149**	**12**	**26**	**181**	**162**	**19**	**5,049**	**-5**	**9**	**-960**	**33**	**5%**	**+1**
3	**Italy**	**2,434**	**0**	**7**	**116**	**106**	**11**	**2,090**	**-5**	**4**	**-0**	**--**	**8**	**+1**
4	Singapore	186	3	1	114	99	15	163	-2	0	-5	0	3	+1
5	**Greece**	**374**	**8**	**1**	**111**	**99**	**12**	**338**	**-2**	**1**	**-27**	**1**	**9**	**+2**
6	Egypt	198	16	1	105	–	--	188	5	0	-27	1	--	--
7	**Belgium**	**454**	**0**	**1**	**98**	**92**	**6**	**461**	**-3**	**1**	**-1**	**0**	**8**	**+1**
8	Sudan	53	-6	0	97	--	--	54	5	0	4	--	--	--
9	Hungary	104	-8	0	84	62	22	124	-6	0	9	--	--	--
10	Cote d'Ivoire	19	-3	0	81	–	--	23	--	0	0	--	--	--
11	**France**	**2,028**	**5**	**6**	**77**	**66**	**11**	**2,635**	**-2**	**5**	**-105**	**4**	**9**	**+2**
12	**Portugal**	**167**	**3**	**0**	**76**	**63**	**13**	**220**	**-3**	**0**	**-6**	**0**	**9**	**+2**
13	**Germany**	**2,423**	**1**	**7**	**75**	**68**	**7**	**3,235**	**-5**	**6**	**-16**	**1**	**7**	**0**
14	**Austria**	**263**	**2**	**1**	**70**	**64**	**6**	**374**	**-4**	**1**	**-5**	**0**	**5**	**+1**
15	**India**	**854**	**-3**	**2**	**69**	**80**	**-12**	**1,243**	**6**	**2**	**31**	**--**	**--**	**--**
16	Uruguay	21	-2	0	67	67	0	32	3	0	0	--	--	--
17	**UK**	**1,444**	**3**	**4**	**66**	**42**	**24**	**2,198**	**-5**	**4**	**-49**	**2**	**7**	**+2**
18	**Canada**	**870**	**-5**	**3**	**66**	**70**	**-4**	**1,319**	**-3**	**2**	**44**	**--**	**8**	**+2**
19	**Netherlands**	**503**	**-1**	**1**	**64**	**52**	**12**	**790**	**-4**	**1**	**4**	**--**	**4**	**+1**
20	Morocco	58	2	0	64	–	--	91	5	0	-1	0	--	--
21	**Ireland**	**140**	**19**	**0**	**62**	**27**	**34**	**227**	**-7**	**0**	**-23**	**1**	**12**	**+6**
22	Albania	7	-3	0	60	57	3	12	3	0	0	--	--	--
23	**Argentina**	**178**	**-7**	**1**	**59**	**59**	**0**	**301**	**1**	**1**	**14**	**--**	**--**	**--**
24	Philippines	93	-2	0	59	71	-13	159	1	0	2	--	--	--
25	**USA**	**7,811**	**23**	**23**	**55**	**37**	**17**	**14,266**	**-2**	**25**	**-1,438**	**50**	**9**	**+3**
	Top 1-25	**$29,836**	**1%**	**86%**	**75%**	**67%**	**8%**	**$35,595**	**-2%**	**61%**	**$2,662**	**92%**	**8%**	**1**
	Global	**34,632**	**8**	**100**	**68**	**66**	**2**	**57,937**	**-2**	**100**	**2,886**	**100**	**7**	**2**

Source: IMF, Business Intelligence Monitor .

…‘Top 75’ Countries Ranked by **Net Debt as % of GDP**…

					Net Debt as % of GDP									
Rank	Country	2009 Net Debt Outstanding ($B)	Y/Y	As % of World Total	2009	2005	05-09 Change	2009 GDP ($B)	Y/Y	As % of World Total	2009 Budget Surplus / Deficit ($B)	As % of World Gross Deficit	2009 Unemploy-ment Rate	Y/Y (pps)
26	Tunisia	$22	-3%	0%	55%	55	0	$40	3%	0%	1	0	--	--
27	Ethiopia	18	29	0	55	–	--	34	10	0	-4	0	--	--
28	Colombia	123	-5	0	54	54	0	229	0	0	7	--	--	--
29	Cyprus	12	2	0	54	68	-14	23	-2	0	-0	--	5	+2
30	**Poland**	**223**	**-11**	**1**	**53**	**47**	**6**	**423**	**2**	**1**	**26**	**--**	**--**	**--**
31	**Spain**	**757**	**20**	**2**	**53**	**43**	**10**	**1,438**	**-4**	**2**	**-125**	**4**	**18**	**+7**
32	Kenya	15	2	0	51	--	--	30	2	0	-0	0	--	--
33	**Norway**	**187**	**-17**	**1**	**51**	**45**	**6**	**369**	**-2**	**1**	**38**	**--**	**3**	**+1**
34	Ghana	7	-11	0	48	–	--	15	4	0	1	--	--	--
35	Bolivia	8	6	0	46	46	0	18	3	0	-0	--	--	--
36	**Sweden**	**175**	**-5**	**1**	**44**	**51**	**-7**	**398**	**-4**	**1**	**9**	**--**	**8**	**+2**
37	**Brazil**	**650**	**-6**	**2**	**44**	**44**	**0**	**1,482**	**0**	**3**	**40**	**--**	**--**	**--**
38	**Switzerland**	**212**	**5**	**1**	**44**	**53**	**-9**	**484**	**-1**	**1**	**-10**	**0**	**4**	**+1**
39	Latvia	10	56	0	43	12	30	24	-18	0	-4	0	--	--
40	Malawi	2	15	0	42	--	--	5	8	0	-0	0	--	--
41	Malaysia	84	0	0	41	44	-3	207	-2	0	0	--	--	--
42	**Denmark**	**125**	**7**	**0**	**40**	**38**	**3**	**308**	**-5**	**1**	**-8**	**0**	**3**	**+2**
43	Gabon	4	-25	0	38	–	--	11	-1	0	1	--	--	--
44	Finland	91	-2	0	37	42	-4	242	-8	0	2	--	8	+2
45	**Turkey**	**219**	**-14**	**1**	**37**	**52**	**-15**	**594**	**-5**	**1**	**36**	**--**	**--**	**--**
46	Czech Republic	68	6	0	36	30	6	190	-4	0	-4	0	7	+2
47	Slovenia	17	43	0	35	27	8	50	-7	0	-5	0	6	+2
48	Slovakia	30	10	0	34	44	-10	88	-5	0	-3	0	--	--
49	Croatia	21	-5	0	34	38	-5	62	-6	0	1	--	--	--
50	**Australia**	**309**	**-3**	**1**	**34**	**36**	**-3**	**920**	**1**	**2**	**8**	**--**	**6**	**+1**
	Top 26-50	**$3,392**	**0%**	**10%**	**44%**	**44%**	**0%**	**$7,682**	**-2%**	**13%**	**$164**	**6%**	**6%**	**2**
	Global	**34,632**	**8**	**100**	**68**	**66**	**2**	**57,937**	**-2**	**100**	**2,886**	**100**	**7**	**2**

Source: IMF, Business Intelligence Monitor.

…'Top 75' Countries Ranked by **Net Debt as % of GDP**

Rank	Country	2009 Net Debt Outstanding ($B)	Y/Y	As % of World Total	Net Debt as % of GDP			2009 GDP ($B)	Y/Y	As % of World Total	2009 Budget Surplus / Deficit ($B)	As % of World Gross Deficit	2009 Unemploy-ment Rate	Y/Y (pps)
					2009	2005	05-09 Change							
51	Zambia	$4	-16%	0%	32%	32	--	$12	6%	0%	1	--	--	--
52	Macedonia	3	1	0	31	47	-16	9	--	0	-0	0	--	--
53	Ecuador	17	2	0	30	30	0	56	0	0	-0	0	--	--
54	Lithuania	11	45	0	30	18	11	36	-15	0	-3	0	--	--
55	Peru	37	0	0	29	29	0	127	1	0	0	--	--	--
56	South Africa	78	0	0	28	--	--	277	-2	0	-0	0	--	--
57	Paraguay	4	-15	0	27	27	0	14	-5	0	1	--	--	--
58	**Venezuela**	**95**	**11**	**0**	**27**	**27**	**0**	**353**	**-3**	**1**	**-9**	**0**	**--**	**--**
59	New Zealand	29	-10	0	26	27	-1	110	-2	0	3	--	6	+2
60	Thailand	64	1	0	24	26	-2	266	-2	0	-0	0	--	--
61	Namibia	2	2	0	24	--	--	9	-1	0	-0	--	--	--
62	Tanzania	5	7	0	24	--	--	22	5	0	-0	0	--	--
63	Senegal	3	-6	0	23	--	--	13	2	0	0	--	--	--
64	Mozambique	2	-2	0	22	--	--	10	6	0	0	--	--	--
65	Romania	35	29	0	22	16	6	161	-7	0	-8	0	--	--
66	Uganda	3	8	0	21	--	--	16	7	0	-0	0	--	--
67	Bulgaria	7	-4	0	15	29	-14	45	-5	0	0	--	--	--
68	Nigeria	24	-20	0	15	--	--	165	6	0	6	--	--	--
69	Angola	10	-18	0	15	--	--	70	0	0	2	--	--	--
70	Cameroon	3	-8	0	14	--	--	22	2	0	0	--	--	--
71	**China**	**609**	**7**	**2**	**13**	**18**	**-5**	**4,758**	**9**	**8**	**-38**	**1**	**--**	**--**
72	Kazakhstan	11	3	0	11	--	--	107	1	0	-0	0	--	--
73	Algeria	13	-16	0	10	--	--	135	2	0	2	--	--	--
74	**Russia**	**92**	**-15**	**0**	**7**	**14**	**-7**	**1,255**	**-8**	**2**	**17**	**--**	**--**	**--**
75	Estonia	1	15	0	7	5	2	18	-14	0	-0	0	--	--
	Top 51-75	**$1,163**	**0%**	**3%**	**23%**	**27%**	**-4%**	**$8,064**	**0%**	**14%**	**$60**	**2%**	**6%**	**2**
	Global	**34,632**	**8**	**100**	**68**	**66**	**2**	**57,937**	**-2**	**100**	**2,886**	**100**	**7**	**2**

Note: China's net debt may be under-reported as it excludes potential liabilities from bad loans of state-owned banks.
Source: IMF, Business Intelligence Monitor.

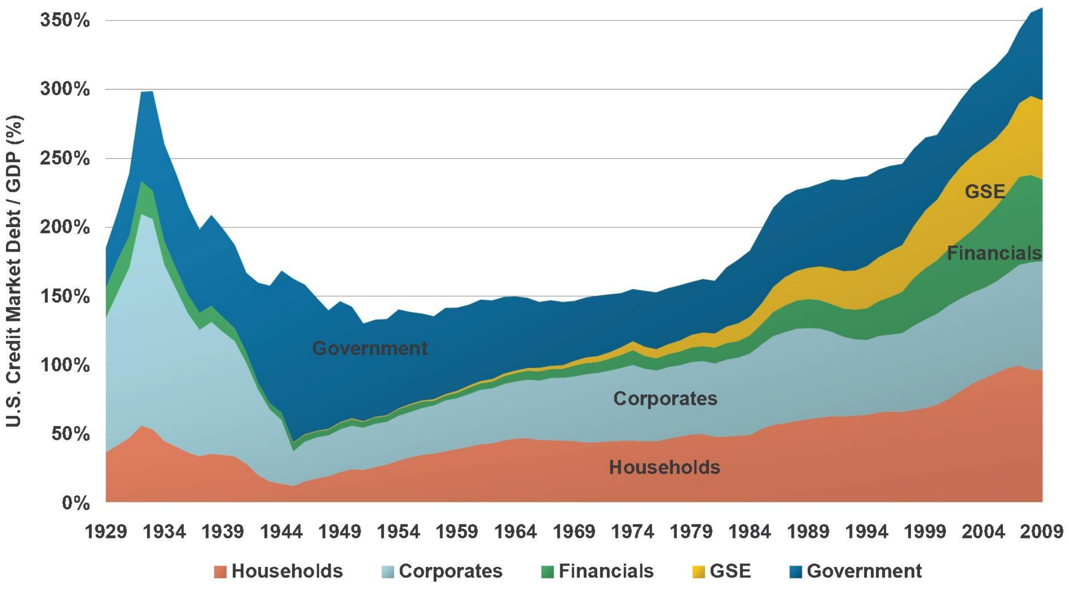
OECD Countries Ranked by **Gross Debt as % of GDP**

Rank	Country	2009 Gross Debt Outstanding ($B)	Y/Y	As % of OECD Total	Gross Debt as % of GDP			2009 GDP ($B)	Y/Y	As % of OECD Total
					2009	2005	05-09 Change			
1	Japan	$974	14%	27%	193%	175%	18%	$5,049	-5%	13%
2	Italy	269	1	7	129	120	9	2,090	-5	5
3	Iceland	1	-8	0	123	53	70	12	-28	0
4	Greece	40	8	1	119	114	5	338	-2	1
5	Belgium	47	-1	1	101	96	5	461	-3	1
6	Portugal	19	4	1	87	74	13	220	-3	1
7	France	227	5	6	86	76	11	2,635	-2	7
8	Hungary	10	-13	0	84	69	16	124	-6	0
9	USA	1,184	17	32	83	61	22	14,266	-2	36
10	Canada	109	4	3	82	72	11	1,319	-3	3
11	Germany	247	-2	7	76	71	5	3,235	-5	8
12	UK	159	4	4	72	46	26	2,198	-5	6
13	Austria	26	-4	1	70	71	-1	374	-4	1
14	Ireland	16	23	0	70	33	38	227	-7	1
15	Netherlands	54	-6	1	69	61	7	790	-4	2
16	Spain	90	18	2	63	51	12	1,438	-4	4
17	Poland	25	-14	1	58	55	4	423	2	1
18	Finland	13	15	0	53	48	4	242	-8	1
19	Denmark	16	11	0	52	46	6	308	-5	1
20	Sweden	21	-8	1	52	60	-8	398	-4	1
21	Norway	18	-28	0	49	49	0	369	-2	1
22	Czech Republic	8	2	0	42	34	8	190	-4	0
23	Switzerland	20	-5	1	42	56	-15	484	-1	1
24	Slovakia	3	17	0	39	38	1	88	-5	0
25	New Zealand	4	3	0	35	27	8	110	-2	0
26	Korea	29	-3	1	35	27	8	833	-11	2
27	Australia	18	28	0	19	16	3	920	1	2
28	Luxembourg	1	-5	0	18	8	11	52	-11	0
	OECD Total	$3,648	9%	100%	90%	76%	14%	$39,261	-4%	100%

Note: Data for Slovenia and Estonia not available. Data may differ from Eurostat / national government figures. Gross debt data are not always comparable across countries due to different definitions or treatment of debt components. Notably, USA and Australia gross debt include the funded portion of government employee pension liabilities, which overstates their debt levels relative to other countries. Source: OECD.

Total Government + Private Debt in USA – At Historic High of 360% of GDP

USA Total Credit Market Debt Outstanding as % of GDP, 1929 – 2009



Source: Dept. of Treasury, Federal Reserve.

Appendix

Useful Links

Appendix – Useful Links

- Congressional Budget Office, "The Long-Term Budget Outlook," 6/2010 http://cbo.gov/doc.cfm?index=11579
- Congressional Budget Office, "Budget and Economic Outlook, Fiscal Years 2011 Through 2021," 1/2011 http://cbo.gov/doc.cfm?index=12039
- Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, "The 2010 Annual Report of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Hospital Insurance and Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Funds," 8/5/2010 https://www.cms.gov/ReportsTrustFunds/downloads/tr2010.pdf
- Department of the Treasury, "2010 Financial Report of the United States Government," 12/2010 http://www.fms.treas.gov/fr/10frusg/10frusg.pdf
- National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, "The Moment of Truth: Report of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform," 12/1/2010 http://www.fiscalcommission.gov/sites/fiscalcommission.gov/files/documents/TheMomentofTruth12_1_2010.pdf
- Social Security Administration, "The 2010 Annual Report of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance and Federal Disability Insurance Trust Funds," 8/9/2010 http://www.ssa.gov/oact/tr/2010/tr2010.pdf
- White House Office of Management and Budget, "Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2012," 2/2011 http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/Overview/

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Glossary

Accountable Care Organization (ACO) - A health system model with the ability to provide, and manage with patients, the continuum of care across different institutional settings, including at least ambulatory (outpatient) and inpatient hospital care and possibly post acute care. ACOs have the capability of planning budgets and resources and are of sufficient size to support comprehensive, valid, and reliable performance measurement. The ACO model is one of the latest designs for managing healthcare costs and especially Medicare costs, and is gaining traction among policymakers desperate to control costs and boost quality in healthcare.

Accrual accounting - A system of accounting in which revenues are recorded when they are earned and outlays are recorded when goods are received or services are performed, even though the actual receipt of revenues and payment for goods or services may occur, in whole or in part, at a different time. Compare with cash accounting.

Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) - All income that is subject to taxation under the individual income tax after "above-the-line" deductions for such things as alimony payments and certain contributions to individual retirement accounts. Personal exemptions and the standard or itemized deductions are subtracted from AGI to determine taxable income

Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) - A tax intended to limit the extent to which higher-income people can reduce their tax liability (the amount they owe) through the use of preferences in the tax code. Taxpayers subject to the AMT are required to recalculate their tax liability on the basis of a more limited set of exemptions, deductions, and tax credits than would normally apply. The amount by which a taxpayer's AMT calculation exceeds his or her regular tax calculation is that person's AMT liability.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) - This act provided appropriations for several federal programs and increased or extended some benefits payable under Medicaid, unemployment compensation, and nutrition assistance, among others. ARRA also reduced individual and corporate income taxes and made other changes to tax laws.

Asset-Backed Security - Security backed by real estate or another type of asset; a claim on an income flow, such as expected interest payments on loans, payments on leases, royalty payments, or receivables; a claim on the principal of a loan; or a claim on the expected appreciation of an asset.

Automatic Stabilizers - Taxes that decrease and expenditures that increase when the economy goes into a recession (and vice-versa when the economy booms) without requiring any action on the part of the government. Stabilizers tend to reduce the depth of recessions and dampen booms.

Bundled Payment (Healthcare) - Also known as episode-based payment, defined as the reimbursement of health care providers (such as hospitals and physicians) on the basis of expected costs for clinically-defined episodes of care. It has been described as "a middle ground" between fee-for-service reimbursement (in which providers are paid for each service rendered to a patient) and capitation (in which providers are paid a "lump sum" per patient regardless of how many services the patient receives).

Business Cycle - Fluctuations in overall business activity accompanied by swings in the unemployment rate, interest rates, and corporate profits. Over a business cycle, real (inflation-adjusted) activity rises to a peak (its highest level during the cycle) and then falls until it reaches a trough (its lowest level following the peak), whereupon it starts to rise again, defining a new cycle. Business cycles are irregular, varying in frequency, magnitude, and duration. (NBER) See real and unemployment rate.

Cash Accounting - A system of accounting in which revenues are recorded when they are actually received and outlays are recorded when payment is made. Compare with accrual accounting.

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) – US federal agency which administers Medicare, Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program.

Copayment – A flat amount paid out of pocket per medical service, e.g., $5 per office visit.

Congressional Budget Office (CBO) – A non-partisan federal agency within the legislative branch of the U.S. government, charged with reviewing congressional budgets and other legislative initiatives with budgetary implications.

Conservatorship - The legal process by which an external entity (in the case of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the federal government) establishes control and oversight of a company to put it in a sound and solvent condition.

Consumption - In principle, the value of goods and services purchased and used up during a given period by households and governments. In practice, the Bureau of Economic Analysis counts purchases of many long-lasting goods (such as cars and clothes) as consumption even though the goods are not used up. Consumption by households alone is also called consumer spending. See national income and product accounts.

Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) - An annual increase in Social Security and other entitlement payments to reflect price inflation.

Current-Account Balance - A summary measure of a country's current transactions with the rest of the world, including net exports, net unilateral transfers, and net factor income (primarily the capital income from foreign property received by residents of a country offset by the capital income from property in that country flowing to residents of foreign countries).

Cyclical Deficit or Surplus - The part of the federal budget deficit or surplus that results from the business cycle. The cyclical component reflects the way in which the deficit or surplus automatically increases or decreases during economic expansions or recessions.

Cyclically Adjusted Budget Deficit or Surplus - The federal budget deficit or surplus that would occur under current law if the influence of the business cycle was removed—that is, if the economy operated at potential gross domestic product.

Debt - In the case of the federal government, the total value of outstanding bills, notes, bonds, and other debt instruments issued by the Treasury and other federal agencies. That debt is referred to as federal debt or gross debt. It has two components - debt held by the public (federal debt held by nonfederal investors, including the Federal Reserve System) and debt held by government accounts (federal debt held by federal government trust funds, deposit insurance funds, and other federal accounts). Debt subject to limit is federal debt that is subject to a statutory limit on the total amount issued. The limit applies to gross federal debt except for a small portion of the debt issued by the Treasury and the small amount of debt issued by other federal agencies (primarily the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Postal Service).

Deductible (Medical Insurance) - A fixed amount, usually expressed in dollars in the form of an annual fee, that the beneficiary of a health insurance plan must pay directly to the health care provider before a health insurance plan begins to pay for any costs associated with the insured medical service.

Deficit - The amount by which the federal government's total outlays exceed its total revenues in a given period, typically a fiscal year. The primary deficit is that total deficit excluding net interest.

Defined Benefit Pension Plan – Retirees receive predetermined monthly retirement benefits from employers despite the funding status / investment returns of their pension funds.

Defined Contribution Pension Plan – Retirees contribute specified amount to their pension funds and receive variable monthly retirement benefits depending on investment returns. Examples include Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) and 401(k) plans.

Disposable Personal Income - Personal income—the income that people receive, including transfer payments—minus the taxes and fees that people pay to governments.

Economic Stimulus - Federal fiscal or monetary policies aimed at promoting economic activity, used primarily during recessions. Such policies include reductions in taxes, increases in federal spending, reductions in interest rates, and other support for financial markets and institutions.

Entitlement - A legal obligation of the federal government to make payments to a person, group of people, business, unit of government, or similar entity that meets the eligibility criteria set in law and for which the budget authority is not provided in advance in an appropriation act. Spending for entitlement programs is controlled through those programs' eligibility criteria and benefit or payment rules. The best-known entitlements are the government's major benefit programs, such as Social Security and Medicare.

Excise Tax - A tax levied on the purchase of a specific type of good or service, such as tobacco products or air transportation services.

Federal Poverty Level (FPL) - Income amounts set each February by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services used to determine an individual's or family's eligibility for various public programs, including Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program.

Federal Reserve System - The central bank of the United States. The Federal Reserve is responsible for setting the nation's monetary policy and overseeing credit conditions. See central bank and monetary policy.

Fiscal Policy - The government's tax and spending policies, which influence the amount and maturity of government debt as well as the level, composition, and distribution of national output and income. See debt.

Fiscal Year - A yearly accounting period. The federal government's fiscal year begins October 1 and ends September 30. Fiscal years are designated by the calendar years in which they end—for example, fiscal year 2011 will begin on October 1, 2010, and end on September 30, 2011.

GDP price index - A summary measure of the prices of all goods and services that make up gross domestic product. The change in the GDP price index is used as a measure of inflation in the overall economy.

General Fund - One category of federal funds in the government's accounting structure. The general fund records all revenues and offsetting receipts not earmarked by law for a specific purpose and all spending financed by those revenues and receipts.

Government-Sponsored Enterprise (GSE) - A financial institution created by federal law, generally though a federal charter, to carry out activities such as increasing credit availability for borrowers, reducing borrowing costs, or enhancing liquidity in particular sectors of the economy, notably agriculture and housing. Two housing GSEs (Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac) were taken into federal conservatorship in 2008.

Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) - A managed care plan that combines the function of insurer and provider to give members comprehensive health care from a network of affiliated providers. Enrollees typically pay limited copayments and are usually required to select a primary care physician through whom all care must be coordinated. HMOs generally will not reimburse all costs for services obtained from a non-network provider or without a primary care physician's referral. HMOs often emphasize prevention and careful assessment of medical necessity.

Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB) - A 15-member Independent Payment Advisory Board created under PPACA with significant authority with respect to Medicare payment rates. Beginning in 2014, in any year in which the Medicare per capita growth rate exceeded a target growth rate, the IPAB would be required to recommend Medicare spending reductions. The recommendations would become law unless Congress passed an alternative proposal that achieved the same level of budgetary savings. Subject to some limitations—hospitals, for example, would be exempt until 2020—the IPAB could recommend spending reductions affecting Medicare providers and suppliers, as well as Medicare Advantage and Prescription Drug Plans.

Labor Force - The number of people age 16 or older in the civilian non-institutional population who have jobs or who are available for work and are actively seeking jobs. (The civilian non-institutional population excludes members of the armed forces on active duty and people in penal or mental institutions or in homes for the elderly or infirm.) The labor force participation rate is the labor force as a percentage of the civilian non-institutional population age 16 or older.

Marginal Tax Rate - The tax rate that would apply to an additional dollar of a taxpayer's income. Compare with effective tax rate and statutory tax rate.

Medicaid - Public health insurance program that provides coverage for low-income persons for acute and long-term care. It is financed jointly by state and federal funds (the federal government pays at least 50 percent of the total cost in each state) and is administered by states within broad federal guidelines.

Medicare - Federal health insurance program for virtually all persons age 65 and older, and permanently disabled persons under age 65, who qualify by receiving Social Security Disability Insurance.

Mortgage-Backed Securities (MBSs) - Securities issued by financial institutions to investors with the payments of interest and principal backed by the payments on a package of mortgages. MBSs are structured by their sponsors to create multiple classes of claims, or tranches, of different seniority, based on the cash flows from the underlying mortgages. Investors holding securities in the safest, or most senior, tranche stand first in line to receive payments from borrowers and require the lowest contractual interest rate of all the tranches. Investors holding the least senior securities stand last in line to receive payments, after all more senior claims have been paid. Hence, they are first in line to absorb losses on the underlying mortgages. In return for assuming that risk, holders of the least senior tranche require the highest contractual interest rate of all the tranches.

National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform - A bipartisan commission created by President Obama to address the nation's fiscal challenges. The Commission is charged with identifying policies to improve the fiscal situation in the medium term and to achieve fiscal sustainability over the long run. Specifically, the Commission shall propose recommendations designed to balance the budget, excluding interest payments on the debt, by 2015. In addition, the Commission shall propose recommendations that meaningfully improve the long-run fiscal outlook, including changes to address the growth of entitlement spending and the gap between the projected revenues and expenditures of the Federal Government.

Net Interest - In the federal budget, net interest comprises the government's interest payments on debt held by the public (as recorded in budget function 900), offset by interest income that the government receives on loans and cash balances and by earnings of the National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust. See budget function and debt.

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) – White House office responsible for devising and submitting the president's annual budget proposal to Congress.

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) – An international organization of 31 developed and emerging countries (see list on slide 354) with a shared commitment to democracy and the market economy.

Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) – An accounting concept created by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) by pronouncements designed to address expenses that entities may or may not be legally bound to pay, but pay as a moral obligation (such as retirees' healthcare costs).

Pay-As-You-Go (PAYGO) - Procedures established in House and Senate rules that are intended to ensure that laws that affect direct spending or revenues are budget neutral. The Senate and the House have had such rules in place since 1993 and 2007, respectively.

PEP / Pease (Tax Policy) - PEP is Personal Exemption Phase-out designed to eliminate personal income exemptions for high earners; 3) Pease is a similar phase-out, but instead of applying to personal exemption, it applies to most of the itemized deductions of a taxpayer's claims (mortgage interest, charitable gifts, state & local taxes paid, etc.); Pease is named after Representative Donald Pease (D-OH) who pushed for its enactment in 1990.

Present Value - A single number that expresses a flow of current and future income (or payments) in terms of an equivalent lump sum received (or paid) today. The present value depends on the rate of interest used (the discount rate). For example, if $100 is invested on January 1 at an annual interest rate of 5 percent, it will grow to $105 by January 1 of the next year. Hence, at an annual 5 percent interest rate, the present value of $105 payable a year from today is $100.

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) – A federal statute as the result of the healthcare reform. Signed into law on 3/23/10, the PPACA aims to expand Medicaid eligibility, incentivize businesses to provide health care benefits, prohibit denial of coverage/claims based on pre-existing conditions, establish health insurance exchanges, and support for medical research. The costs of these provisions are offset by a variety of taxes, fees, and cost-saving measures, such as new Medicare taxes for high-income brackets, taxes on indoor tanning, improved fairness in the Medicare Advantage program relative to traditional Medicare, and fees on medical devices and pharmaceutical companies.

Productivity - Average real output per unit of input. Labor productivity is average real output per hour of labor. The growth of labor productivity is defined as the growth of real output that is not explained by the growth of labor input alone. Total factor productivity is average real output per unit of combined labor and capital services. The growth of total factor productivity is defined as the growth of real output that is not explained by the growth of labor and capital. Labor productivity and total factor productivity differ in that increases in capital per worker raise labor productivity but not total factor productivity.

Tax Expenditures - Losses to the U.S. treasury from granting certain deductions, exemptions, or credits to specific categories of taxpayers. Tax breaks are one method Congress uses to promote certain policy objectives. For example, deductions for mortgages encourage home ownership, while credits for childcare expenses allow single parents to work. Tax expenditures are an alternative to direct government spending on policy programs.

Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) - A program that permits the Secretary of the Treasury to purchase or insure troubled financial assets. Authority for the program was initially set by the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 at $700 billion in assets outstanding at any one time and remains in effect until October 3, 2010. The TARP's activities have included the purchase of preferred stock from financial institutions, support to automakers and related businesses, a program to avert housing foreclosures, and partnerships with the private sector.

Trust Funds - In the federal accounting structure, accounts designated by law as trust funds (regardless of any other meaning of that term). Trust funds record the revenues, offsetting receipts, or offsetting collections earmarked for the purpose of the fund, as well as budget authority and outlays of the fund that are financed by those revenues or receipts. The federal government has more than 200 trust funds. The largest and best known finance major benefit programs (including Social Security and Medicare) and infrastructure spending (such as the Highway Trust Fund and the Airport and Airway Trust Fund).

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Date: Sunday, April 3 2011 03:49 PM
Subject: RE: Daily Beast
From: Peter Green <[redacted]>
To: [redacted]
Attachments: image001.jpg; image002.jpg

You are mentioned !

Jeffrey Epstein's Society Friends Close Ranks

by Alexandra Wolfe

Alexandra Wolfe is a former contributing editor to Conde Nast Portfolio. She has written for publications including the New York Times, New York magazine, the New York Observer, and the Wall Street Journal, where she wrote design and lifestyle features for the Weekend Journal section. Before that, she was a reporter at the New York Observer. She is currently working on a book called *American Coddle*, about America's culture of entitlement.

X Close

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No, back then Epstein was mid-makeover. He had monarchy in-house and famous faces at his table. Former Bear Stearns CEO James Cayne had just endorsed Epstein on his science foundation's website (which has been since removed). It seemed Epstein had joined the ranks of former President Clinton, director Roman Polanski, and former New York Governor Eliot Spitzer, whose sex scandals faded in comparison with their celebrity. The conventional wisdom among his friends was that Epstein has been victimized by greedy, morally dubious teenage girls and unscrupulous lawyers. "I've never condoned paying for sex, but if the young lady lied about her age it's her own fault," explained one socialite, who along with hedge-fund manager Wilbur Ross and real-estate magnate Leon Black hobnobbed with Epstein at a Southampton movie screening just two months after his release from "community control" in Florida.

Much of Epstein's entrée into New York society can be credited to Ghislaine Maxwell, the superbly well-connected daughter of the late press magnate Robert Maxwell. Epstein started dating her in the 1990s. The romantic relationship ended after a few years, but they have remained close ever since. Last week two victims publicly alleged that Ghislaine procured them for Epstein, one at age 15 from a Mar-a-Lago country club locker room. Virginia Roberts, now 27, who was Epstein's sexual plaything for several years, told the Mail on Sunday. "Ghislaine sent me to a dentist to have my teeth whitened and I went for Brazilian waxes. He wanted me to look pre-pubescent."

Now, New York friends are suddenly hesitant to talk about Maxwell. "She's a high-end 'fixer'," and so what? they ask. "No one in café society gives a damn that a 15-year-old girl gives massages," says one frequent charity-benefit guest. "She gets people into parties and runs around for a lot of people." As to the fallout from her association with Epstein, he says, "If you're Mike Huckabee it would matter but not if you're Ghislaine Maxwell."

The crowd at the events top publicist Peggy Siegal has organized for Epstein proves the point, at least behind closed doors. "I and many others that know him describe him as brilliant," says Siegal. "His unique mind is what attracts the world's smartest people to his home." Last September, with Siegal's help, Epstein hosted a Break Fast after Yom Kippur. A group of 120 friends brought their children over for a buffet dinner. One attendee, Jonathan Farkas, a New York real-estate heir, has known Epstein for 35 years and visited him while he was in prison. "The side I've been reading about is a side I don't know," he says. Farkas considers Epstein one of the smartest people he knows and often asks him for investment advice. "Unless I've seen it, I don't focus on it," he says.

"From a cerebral and business side he's worshipped," says socialite Debbie Bancroft. "He's incredibly charming and handsome. He's an extraordinary package so I can see why people don't want to believe what they hear. If people come out of jail and are still successful, people are very forgiving, shockingly so."

Renowned scientists whose research Epstein has generously funded through the years also stand by him. Professor Lawrence Krauss, a theoretical physicist and author of *Quantum Man*, has planned scientific conferences with Epstein in St. Thomas and remained close with him throughout his incarceration. "If anything, the unfortunate period he suffered has caused him to really think about what he wants to do with his money and his time, and support knowledge," says Krauss. "Jeffrey has surrounded himself with beautiful women and young women but they're not as young as the ones that were claimed. As a scientist I always judge things on empirical evidence and he always has women ages 19 to 23 around him, but I've never seen anything else, so as a scientist, my presumption is that whatever the problems were I would believe him over other people." Though colleagues have criticized him over his relationship with Epstein, Krauss insists, "I don't feel tarnished in any way by my relationship with Jeffrey; I feel raised by it."

Alexandra Wolfe is a former contributing editor to Conde Nast Portfolio. She has written for publications including The New York Times, New York magazine, The New York Observer, and The Wall Street Journal, where she wrote design and lifestyle features for the Weekend Journal section. She is working on a book called American Coddle*, about America's culture of entitlement.*

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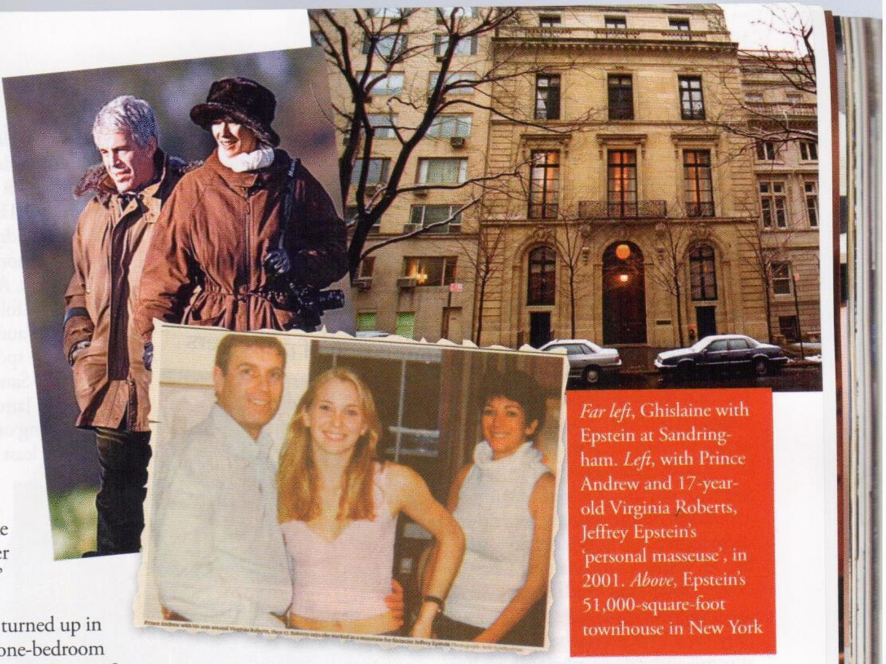
-----Original Message-----
From: [redacted]
Sent: 03 April 2011 12:36
To: Peter Green
Subject: Re: Daily Beast

I cant open anything that is not underlined in blue sorry Peter i am not good at computer stuff.When are you coming here so i can call Catherine Crier please nothing to maryanne about thsi jonathan
=

Jackson, a senior journalist at Maxwell's *Daily Mirror*, says he saw Ghislaine shredding documents aboard her father's yacht shortly after his death. The Maxwells denied this, but Jackson has never retracted his version. Whatever her impulses were after Maxwell died, one thing cannot be disputed: Ghislaine was heartbroken. One friend described her as 'catatonic' with grief. Rupert Fairfax said: 'She worshipped him. He was not just her father, he was her hero. Then, as well as having to cope with losing him, she had to cope with everything people were saying about him.'

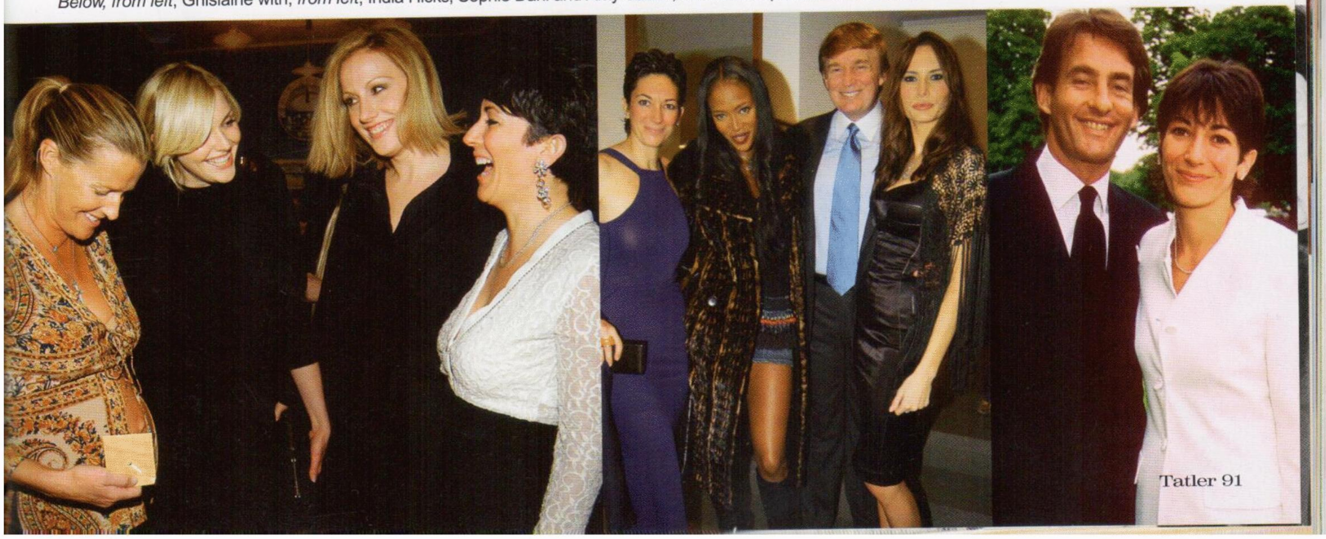
Maxwell's death came when Ghislaine was getting over the break-up of her four-year romance with Count Gianfranco Cicogna, a member of the Ciga hotels clan. The dashing and urbane Cicogna was credited by Ghislaine's friends with helping her shake off the frumpy image she had at Oxford. 'He told her what to wear, where to get her hair cut – everything,' said one.

With her father dead and Cicogna gone, Ghislaine turned up in New York, the town she was to conquer. She rented a one-bedroom flat on the Upper East Side and began to reinvent herself. She was far from destitute. Her father had bought her a pretty mewshouse in South Kensington which, in 1992, was valued at £500,000. She also had a trust fund that provided her with £80,000 a year, at that time more than the prime minister earned. And she was a knockout, with deadly charm and, perhaps most importantly, a bulging Filofax. In London, she had suffered for her father's crimes. One estimate of the money missing from his companies was £727 million. In New York she was a celebrity, with an address book full of the names of rich and famous friends. Robert Maxwell was a determined soldier, ruthless and, by his own admission, an unflinching killer. His daughter, in whose dark beauty the old tyrant can still be discerned, was not about to succumb to guilt by association. She hit the phone. Soon, she was being seen at all the smart parties. Men adored her. She talked dirty in a British boarding-school accent, peppering her Rabelaisian asides with an occasional four-letter word. She once brought dinner-party chatter to a standstill when she announced she was planning to remove all her body hair. Then, about a year after her father's death, she was photographed boarding Concorde at Heathrow, heading back to New York. There was outrage. Maxwell's retirees had just been told their pension payments were being stopped. How could the evil crook's daughter spend £2,000 on a plane ticket while that was happening? In fact, she didn't spend the money. Her ticket was bought by the soft-spoken grey-haired American who, unnoticed by the photographers, boarded the plane with her. This was Jeffrey Epstein, then a shadowy figure whose copious supply of money baffled everyone. What did he do? Some thought he was a bounty hunter, recovering vast sums owed to the very rich. Others said he was a property developer. Or a financier. The question has never been satisfactorily answered. To this day, no one really knows where Epstein gets his money. But there is an awful lot of it. He lives in what is believed to be Manhattan's largest private residence, a house once owned by the Macy family, spanning more than 50,000 square feet. He also has a 7,500-acre ranch in New Mexico, a 70-acre island in the US Virgin Islands and a house in Palm Beach, Florida, which is said to be worth around £3 million. He has a helicopter and an executive jet and he either owns or has access to a Boeing 727. He used the Boeing to fly ex-president Bill Clinton, actors Kevin Spacey and Chris Tucker and others to Africa to investigate AIDS and poverty. When Ghislaine met Epstein, he was in his late 30s and had just been named *Cosmopolitan*'s bachelor of the month. Given his money and screen-star looks, one can see why. But Epstein had something else Ghislaine found irresistible. He is frighteningly clever. He started out as a maths teacher at an exclusive private school and



Far left, Ghislaine with Epstein at Sandringham. *Left*, with Prince Andrew and 17-year-old Virginia Roberts, Jeffrey Epstein's 'personal masseuse', in 2001. *Above*, Epstein's 51,000-square-foot townhouse in New York

Below, from left, Ghislaine with, *from left*, India Hicks, Sophie Dahl and Amy Sacco; Naomi Campbell, Donald Trump and Melania Knauss; and Tim Jefferies



impressed a pupil's father who then recruited him to a job on Wall Street. Epstein used his mathematical knowledge to develop complex formulae that could be applied to financial markets, especially in the area of currency exchange. He went on to form his own company and began advising Leslie Wexner, the billionaire creator of the Limited Brands group, which owns, among other extremely successful companies, Victoria's Secret and La Senza. Some on Wall Street believe that Wexner is the source of Epstein's fortune, although the version Epstein seems to prefer is that he advises a number of very rich clients. Intriguingly, he is said to have a permit to carry a gun. Epstein's talents are not restricted to mathematics. He plays the piano to concert standard (there is a nine-foot Steinway grand in his house) and he cultivates Nobel Prize-winning scientists with whom he engages in arcane conversation.

'Ghislaine was totally in thrall to him,' Rupert Fairfax said. 'The death of her father left a terrible gap in her life and Jeffrey filled it. I remember seeing them together in Aspen. Jeffrey was everything to her. He lifted her up at a time when she was very down.' Ghislaine's friends have asserted that she desperately wanted to marry Epstein, but that their romance turned into what one has described as 'an affectionate business relationship'. Epstein provided Ghislaine with a home, a beaux-arts townhouse on the Upper East Side close to his own residence. He also gave her the wherewithal to run it in a grand manner; she employed a substantial staff, including a full-time butler and maid who had their own quarters at the property. Ghislaine appeared effortlessly to establish herself as one of New York's leading socialites. Witness, for instance, the party she threw for Allegra Hicks, the designer ex-wife of Ashley Hicks, a grandson of Earl Mountbatten and second cousin of the Prince of Wales. The 80 guests at Ghislaine's house included Hollywood actor Matthew Modine, at least one Rockefeller, a Radziwill and numerous billionaires. After toasting the future of Allegra's new shop in New York with vintage Dom Pérignon, Ghislaine took her guests to the library, where the books had been given fake spines with titles naming her friends. The party, like many she hosted, was a triumph and her success gave the slightly gauche Epstein a social entrée that had thus far eluded him. She is credited with helping him forge a friendship with Bill Clinton, among other figures of influence.

> 'Ghislaine was totally in thrall to him. The death of her father left a terrible gap in her life and Jeffrey filled it'

But even Epstein could scarcely have imagined she would create an opportunity for friendship with a member of the British royal family – Prince Andrew, whom she appears to have met in London when he was working at the Minstry of Defence. At the turn of the millennium, Ghislaine and Andrew were hardly ever apart, enjoying eight different jaunts together in the space of a year. In February 2000, they holidayed in Palm Beach. Then they travelled to New York for a fashion show. A month later, Andrew was back in New York at a fundraiser for the London Symphony Orchestra, again accompanied by Ghislaine. A few weeks after that, Andrew returned for another round of socialising with Ghislaine. The following month, they met up for another holiday in Florida. In the autumn, Andrew flew to New York, where he and Ghislaine were spotted together. Just before Christmas, Andrew gave a house party at Sandringham to mark Ghislaine's 39th birthday. A few weeks later, in January 2001, they were on holiday again, in Phuket. What was going on? Was it a romance? No, said informed sources. Because on at least five of the eight occasions when Andrew and Ghislaine were together, Jeffrey Epstein was there as well. Andrew invited them both to Windsor for the Queen's birthday party. One of Epstein's friends, Nobel Prize-winning scientist Murray Gell-Mann, said he understood that Epstein had given the Queen financial advice.

After almost 10 years together, Ghislaine had become what Epstein characterised as his 'best friend'. He once denied that she was on his payroll, but *Tatler*'s inquiries suggest that her financial interests lead directly back to Epstein. In 1995 a company called Ghislaine Corp was registered in Florida, with offices at Epstein's Palm Beach address. Whenever Ghislaine is asked what she does, she says she is managing director of a company called New York Strategy Group. Not much is known about this company except that, according to records, it is in the business of investment counselling. That is Epstein's area of expertise and closer inspection shows that New York Strategy Group is just another part of his financial empire. So if Ghislaine really does work for Epstein, what does she do?

There is, in fact, a clue buried in the court documentation from Pennsylvania. In 2003 a writ was filed by Nelson Shanks, the celebrated portraitist whose sitters have included Pope John Paul II, Ronald Reagan and Diana, Princess of Wales. Shanks claimed that he had been hired to paint the clothing billionaire Leslie Wexner, his wife Abigail and their children. Yet when Shanks finished the picture, Wexner refused to pay for it, owing $339,000. When Shanks sued for his money – successfully, as it turned out – he also named Jeffrey Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell. It was Ghislaine, he said, who had approached him and arranged the deal with Wexner. Epstein was also involved, he said. It

Below, from left, Ghislaine with Imran Khan; Keith Richards; and Yasmin Le Bon

MEMOIR

Nature memoir is anything but a snooze

LINDSAY BORTHWICK
JUNE 2, 2007

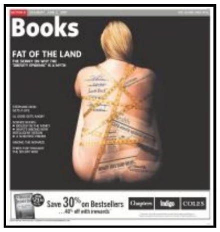
THE SNORING BIRD

My Family's Journey Through A Century of Biology

By Bernd Heinrich

Ecco, 461 pages, $37.95

Print Edition - Section Front



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Deep in the vaults of the American Museum of Natural History lies a bird with a reddish beak: skin number 6999 of the Heinrich Expedition 1931. In life, it was flightless, secretive and rare, living in the dense jungle thicket of the island of Sulawesi, Indonesia. Its call was sonorous but strange - a kind of low rumble or hum, like a deep snore - the signature of Aramidopsis plateni, the Snoring Rail.

The bird's hunter, 36-year-old Gerd Heinrich, had been searching Sulawesi for nearly two years, bagging insects, mammals and other birds, but holding out for the Snoring Rail. Its capture established his reputation as a collector, earned him his nickname, *die Ralle*, and would come to symbolize a life dedicated to discovery.

It would also capture the imagination of his son Bernd, a distinguished biologist at the University of Vermont and best-selling author (*Mind of a Raven*, *Bumblebee Economics*). In *The Snoring Bird*, Bernd Heinrich leads us through his family's extraordinary history, which begins in Europe, ends in America and is shaped at every turn by the rise of the science of biology. With his usual warmth, grace and insight, Heinrich has created an unconventional memoir - equal parts father and son - that explores two radically different, often conflicting approaches to understanding the natural world.

The journey begins at Heinrich's childhood home in rural Maine when, years after Gerd's death, he comes across a pile of his father's personal effects. Strewn around the barn and covered in guano, they would tell a remarkable tale. Gerd was born in Berlin in 1896 but spent his early life on an idyllic agricultural estate in Poland, Borowke, which he called the "home of my soul."

His days were passed on the land, observing and collecting nature's spoils. Then, the First World War intervened. Just 17, Gerd enlisted and eventually joined the Luftwaffe as a pilot, was sought out by the legendary Red Baron and earned an Iron Cross for bravery. Shot down twice over enemy territory, he survived to return to his beloved Borowke, where he soon rediscovered his "old zoological passion to live it again."

Soon after, Gerd encountered a lifelong intellectual companion in Erwin Stresemann, curator of birds at the Museum für Naturkunde in Berlin. Their friendship would survive another war, "revolution, invasion, expulsion, starvation, and emigration." It was Stresemann who, in 1927, sent Gerd on his first zoological expedition, to Persia, and fuelled his ambitions as a naturalist. In addition to Persia and Sulawesi, Gerd would lead zoological expeditions to Burma, Angola, Tanzania and elsewhere.

While collecting specimens around the world, he was able to pursue an abiding passion, ichneumons, "mysterious and exotic wasps that are parasitic connoisseurs," and went on to describe 1,479 new species in his lifetime. He became one of the world's foremost experts on these rarefied creatures, obsessively collecting and carefully differentiating one species from another based on subtle differences in body markings or shape, just as Vladimir Nabokov had done with his "blues" in the butterfly world.

Gerd's desire to publish his manuscript on Oriental ichneumons brought him and his family to the United States when he was 55. There, he lived in poverty, an amateur naturalist marginalized by the scientific community. Yet in rural Maine, living in an old farmhouse with no electricity and no running water, he was close to the wilderness, which meant freedom. He had found New Borowke.

In the latter half of *The Snoring Bird*, Bernd Heinrich's story, we learn that he has also settled in Maine and that he shares his father's faith: "I believe ... that our well-being is tied not so much to the structure of our society and the politics that determine it, as to our ability to maintain contact with nature, to feel that we are part of the natural order." It is this shared belief and fascination with the natural world that led them both to the frontiers of biology; and, it is there that their lives diverged dramatically.

Gerd practised taxonomy, a descriptive science, while Bernd liked to experiment. Gerd's work was "drudgery," whereas Bernd's was (and, one gets the sense, still is) "purest joy." Species identification, once at the forefront of biology, came to be derided as mere "stamp collecting." By contrast, experimentation has become the paradigm for modern biology and its growth logarithmic.

Modern biology's currency, Heinrich reminds us, is ideas. He has had many. Big ones. Ones published in leading journals, including Science, and which earned him prestigious professorships and the admiration of his peers. They also brought him an unusual degree of academic freedom, which he has used to full effect, often taking laypeople along on his wide-ranging journeys of discovery - into the minds of ravens, for instance - through popular writing.

Bernd's chapters here are earnest and humorous, and offer a window into the making of a scientist. But it is the early chapters on Gerd's life that captivate.

Heinrich skillfully recreates his father's story, through correspondence, an unpublished memoir and remembrances, to create a nuanced portrait - at times generous, at other times hostile.

Gerd never celebrated his son's success as a scientist - at least not outwardly. The conflict between old science and new tainted their relationship, and Gerd's struggle for recognition in science made him resentful. On the other hand, Bernd struggled for years to see the value in his father's science and to understand his motivations. The memoir documents this struggle and builds to an ardent defence of his father's choices and of specimen-collecting biology: "There was a purpose, an ethic, even a morality to what naturalists of his time practised"; "Biology is history, and no amount of chemistry can explain how or why the different ichneumon wasps came into being, or what role they play in different ecosystems"; "Naming before knowing."

Importantly, *The Snoring Bird* reminds us that science itself evolves, and that scientists are a product of their time and culture. Bernd Heinrich leaves us with no doubt that in Gerd's youth, "the naturalists' reputation shone brightly," and that taxonomy has provided biologists with a framework for thinking about the natural world, upon which modern biology is built.

But he glosses over the fact that biology is in the midst of a new - some would say revolutionary - effort to catalogue Earth's biological diversity, using a short sequence of each organism's DNA called DNA barcodes. They have verified past species divisions - those determined by taxonomists such as Gerd - and clarified others; and, they represent another tool with which to understand and protect this bounty. In barcoding, an old science has become new again - albeit transformed. But it is proof that to most of us, nature is still "a magic show of the highest order," and that the values of naturalists such as Bernd and Gerd Heinrich live on.

Lindsay Borthwick is a science journalist living in Toronto. She first encountered Bernd Heinrich's work as an editor at the science/culture magazine, Seed.

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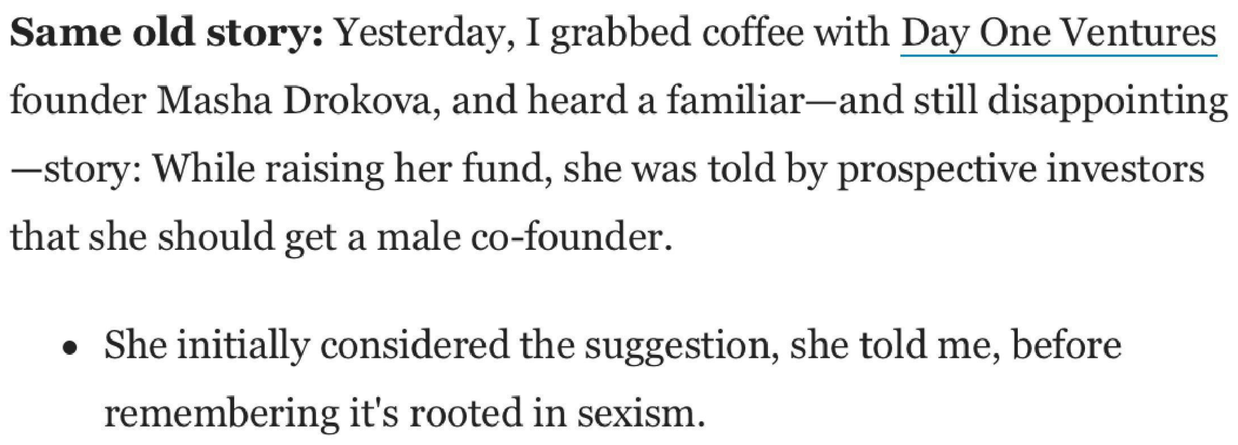
Phillip Crawley, Publisher

From: jeffrey E. [jeevacation@gmail.com]
Sent: 2/21/2018 5:55:09 PM
To: Steven Sinofsky [[redacted]]
Subject: Re: Pro Rata: Wednesday, February 21
Attachments: image1.png

Thx for taking the time

On Wed, Feb 21, 2018 at 1:48 PM Steven Sinofsky <[redacted]> wrote:

Excerpt from below...



Same old story: Yesterday, I grabbed coffee with Day One Ventures founder Masha Drokova, and heard a familiar—and still disappointing—story: While raising her fund, she was told by prospective investors that she should get a male co-founder.

- She initially considered the suggestion, she told me, before remembering it's rooted in sexism.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Kia Kokalitcheva <[redacted]>
Date: February 21, 2018 at 7:32:17 AM PST
To: [redacted]
Subject: Pro Rata: Wednesday, February 21

View in browser

Pro Rata

By Kia Kokalitcheva ·Feb 21, 2018

Welcome back, readers. Once again, a reminder to send me your delicious scoops and tips at kia@axios.com or find me on Twitter at @imkialikethecar.

Hot event alert: RSVP to our 2/26 event in NYC for interviews with NBA star Draymond Green, BBG Ventures' Susan Lyne, JPMorgan's Jennifer Piepszak, and Equinox CEO Harvey Spevak.

Top of the Morning

Illustration: Rebecca Zisser / Axios

AT&T's proposed $85 billion purchase of Time Warner took another turn yesterday. A federal judge hearing the Justice Department's lawsuit to block the deal denied a request by the telecom giant to disclose communications between Justice Department officials, including Attorney General Jeff Sessions, and the White House about the deal.

- **Why it matters:** The ruling is a blow to AT&T's attempt to show that the lawsuit to block the deal is politically motivated by President Trump's antipathy for CNN, which Time Warner owns. AT&T says it wasn't asked to offload any assets as part of the deal until after Trump took office.
- **What they're saying:** “We respect the judge’s decision and look forward to the upcoming trial,” said Dan Petrocelli, who is leading AT&T and Time Warner's defense in the case, in a statement.
- **At a hearing on Friday,** a Justice Department lawyer said that AT&T's argument for the documents "didn't make sense."
- **Go deeper:** Our report from the courtroom on Friday, when DOJ and AT&T presented their arguments.

Fund scoop: Niv Dror, who joined AngelList through its acquisition of Product Hunt in 2016, is raising a small early-stage fund focused on consumer products, multiple sources tell Axios. Dror declined to comment.

- The fund will raise at least $1 million, though one source says it could go up to $2-3 million.
- Like Product Hunt colleague Ryan Hoover’s own VC fund, Dror’s will be managed on the back-end by AngelList.

Same old story: Yesterday, I grabbed coffee with Day One Ventures founder Masha Drokova, and heard a familiar—and still disappointing—story: While raising her fund, she was told by prospective investors that she should get a male co-founder.

- She initially considered the suggestion, she told me, before remembering it's rooted in sexism.

Softbank $$$: Softbank’s Vision Fund is in early talks to raise additional funds from Bahrain’s sovereign wealth fund, Mumtalakat, the latter’s CEO told Reuters.

- The Persian Gulf has been a major source of funds for the Vision Fund: Public Investment Fund, Saudi Arabia’s main sovereign wealth fund, and Abu Dhabi’s Mubadala, are already investors.
- And it’s not the only one visiting the region’s investors—funds focused on tokens and cryptocurrencies have also been fundraising in the area, I’m told.

Unicorn stampede: We’re not even two months into 2018 and yet, seven startups have already seen their private valuations cross the $1 billion mark—earning “unicorn” status—according to Pitchbook. Last year: 53. The word “overvalued” comes to mind...

The BFD

Photo: George Rose/Getty Images

Broadcom has adjusted its takeover offer for Qualcomm to $79 per share, down from the its “best and final” bid of $82. The move is a response to Qualcomm's announcement yesterday it would pay $127.50 a share for NXP, up from the $110 it had offered.

- **Why it's the BFD:** Broadcom and Qualcomm's takeover dance has taken a dramatic turn for what should have been a boring transaction between two chip companies.
- **Bottom line:** "Broadcom has long said its acquisition of the San Diego-based chipmaker is contingent on Qualcomm buying NXP at the previously agreed price, saving a large amount of cash Broadcom could hypothetically use for its own purposes once the acquisition goes through... Qualcomm raised its NXP bid to secure support from activist investors who have piled into NXP and demanded a higher sale price." — Bloomberg.

Venture Capital Deals

- **Moovit**, an Israeli maker of a transportation app, has raised $50 million in Series D funding led by **Intel Capital**, with participation from Sequoia, BMW iVentures, NGP, Sound Ventures, BRM, Gemini, Vaizra, Vintage, and Hanaco. http://axios.link/fQSW
- **Vectra**, a San Jose, Calif.-based cybersecurity startup, has raised $36 million in Series D funding led by **Atlantic Bridge**, with participation from the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund, Nissho Electronics Corp., Khosla Ventures, Accel Partners, IA Ventures, AME Cloud Ventures, DAG Ventures and Wipro Ventures. www.vectra.ai
- **FourKites**, a Chicago-based make of supply chain management software, has raised $35 million in Series B funding. **August Capital** led the round, with participation from Bain Capital Ventures and Hyde Park Venture Partners. http://axios.link/7XWI
- **DecaWave**, an Irish fabless semiconductor company, has raised $30 million in funding led by **Atlantic Bridge Ventures**, with participation from the China Ireland Growth Technology Fund, ACT Venture Capital, and ZZ Ventures.
- **Kidaptiv**, a Mountain View, Calif.-based maker of adaptive learning software, has raised $19.1 million in Series C funding led by **Formation 8** and Korean education company **Woongjin ThinkBig**. http://axios.link/Fuut
- **Prophesee**, a Paris-based machine vision startup, has raised $19 million in Series B funding led by an undisclosed investor, with participation from 360 Capital Partners, Supernova Invest, iBionext, Intel Capital, Renault Group, and Robert Bosch Venture Capital, according to Tech.eu. http://axios.link/QAyn
- **Greenlight Financial Technology**, an Atlanta-based maker of a smart debit card for kids, teens, and college students, has raised $16 million in Series A funding led by TTV Capital with participation from New Enterprise Associates, Relay Ventures, SunTrust Bank, Ally Financial, nbkc bank, Canapi, and the Amazon Alexa Fund. www.greenlightcard.com
- **Zagster**, a Cambridge, Mass.-based bike-share service, has raised $15 million in new funding led by **Edison Capital Partners**. www.zagster.com
- **Morphisec**, and Israel-based cybersecurity startup, has raised $12 million in Series B funding from Orange Digital Ventures, Jerusalem Venture Partners, General Electric, and Deutsche Telekom. www.morphisec.com
- **Tunity**, a New York-based live audio service for television content, has raised $12 million in Series A funding. Investors include former Morgan Stanley CEO John Mack and WeWork CEO Adam Neumann. www.tunity.com
- **Fever Labs**, a New York-based maker of an event discovery app, has raised $11.7 million in new funding, according to an SEC filing. www.feverup.com

• **Gabi**, a San Francisco-based insurance shopping services, has raised $9.5 million in Series A funding led by **Canvas Ventures**, with participation from Correlation Ventures, Northwestern Mutual Future Ventures, Securian Ventures, A.Capital Ventures and Project A. www.gabi.com

• **Dover Microsystems**, a Waltham, Mass.-based cybersecurity company, has raised $6 million in seed funding. **Hyperplane Venture Capital** led the round with participation from **Draper, Qualcomm Ventures** and the **Hub Angels Investment Group.** www.dovermicrosystems.com

• **Anyfin**, a Stockholm-based loan refinancing startup, has raised $5.9 million (€4.8 million) in Series A funding led by **Accel** and **Northzone**, with participation from Global Founders Capital and angel investors. http://axios.link/IpTj

• **Thirdpresence**, a Helsinkin-based A.I. programmatic video advertising company, has raised $2.4 million in seed funding from Inventure, Tesi, and existing investors. www.thirdpresence.com

Private Equity Deals

• **Rhone Capital** agreed to buy **Fogo de Chão** (NASDAQ: FOGO), a Dallas-based Brazilian steakhouse chain, in a deal valued at $560 million. Credit Suisse and Wells Fargo Bank, National Association provided financing. www.fogodechao.com

• **Behrman Capital** has acquired **Corfin Industries**, a Salem, N.H.-based provider of microelectronic component preparation services. www.corfin.com

🚑**Water Street Healthcare Partners** and **JLL Partners** have agreed to acquire **Dohmen Life Science Services**, a Milwaukee-based provider of operations services to biopharma and medical device companies, from The Dohmen Company. www.dlss.com

• **PWP Growth Equity** and **RedHawk Investment** have invested an undisclosed amount into **360Training**, an Austin, Texas-based provider of online training courses for regulated industries. www.360training.com

• **Orient Hontai Capital**, a Chinese private equity firm, has agreed to buy a 53.5% stake in **Imagina Media Audiovisual**, a Spanish media company, valuing the target company at an enterprise value of €1.9 billion (US$2.34 billion). http://axios.link/CN5I

• **Leeds Equity Partners** is investing in **Endeavor Schools**, a Miami-based owner and operator of 37 private K-12 schools in the U.S. www.endeavorschools.com

• **Cathay Capital MidCap Fund** is buying a majority of stake in **E. WINKEMANN**, a German auto supplier. Financial terms weren't announced.

Equistone Partners Europe will retain a stake along with company management. www.winkemann.de

Public Offerings

- **Deutsche Bank** (NYSE: DB) plans to debut an IPO of its asset-management arm, DWS, for Monday next week, according to Reuters. It could list on the Frankfurt exchange as early as March 19. Deutsche Bank is planning to offer 25% of existing DWS shares for an expected 1.5 billion to €2 billion ($1.85 billion to $2.47 billion). http://axios.link/KNnd
- **Opes Acquisition**, a Mexico-based blank check company formed by Axis Capital Management to acquire a Mexican business, has filed for an $100 million IPO. It will offer 10 million units at a price of $10. At that price, Opes Acquisition would command a market value of $129 million. Each unit consists of one share of common stock and one warrant exercisable at $11.50. It plans to list on the Nasdaq under the symbol OPESU, with EarlyBirdCapital is the sole bookrunner on the deal. www.axiscapital.com.mx/eng
- **Tiberius Acquisition**, a Metairie, La.-based blank check company formed to acquire a middle-market insurance business, filed for a $150 million IPO. It will offer 15 million units at a price of $10. At that price, Tiberius Acquisition would command a market value of $188 million. Each unit consists of one share of common stock and one warrant to purchase one share of common stock. It plans to list on the Nasdaq under the symbol TIBRU, with Cantor Fitzgerald and Dowling & Partners are the joint bookrunners on the deal.

Liquidity Events

- **Xerox Corp** shareholders Carl Icahn and Darwin Deason said Tuesday that the company should sell itself to one of its rivals or a private equity firm, opposing a potential deal with Fujifilm, according to Reuters. http://axios.link/jtPN

More M&A

- **S&P Global** (NYSE: SPGI)**,** a provider or markets data and analytics, has agreed to set to acquire **Panjiva**, a New York-based provider of supply chain data. www.panjiva.com
- **The Adecco Group**, a Swiss human resources services firm, has acquired **Vettery**, a New York-based recruiting startup, for just over $100 million, according to TechCrunch. http://axios.link/hBcz
- **Oracle** has acquired **Zenedge**, an Aventura, Fla.-based cybersecurity solutions provider. www.zenedge.com
- **Bosch** has acquired **Splitting Fares**, a Detroit-based startup that provides ride-sharing platforms. www.splt.io

Fundraising

- **EQT** is seeking 10.75 billion euros ($13.2 billion) for a new buyout fund, according to the Financial Times.
- **TechOperators Venture Capital**, an Atlanta-based venture capital firm, has raised $40.2 million toward a $100 million third venture fund, according to an SEC filing. www.techoperators.com

It's Personnel

- **Amy Errett** has joined **True Ventures** as a venture partner. Erret will remain CEO of Madison Reed, a San Francisco-based hair color company. http://axios.link/r9h8
- **Jeff Schumacher** is stepping down as CEO of **BCG Digital Ventures** and will become non-executive chairman of the firm. www.bcgdv.com

• **Nicholas Leiby** has joined **Weinberg Capital Group** as director. He was previously vice president at Resilience Capital Partners. www.weinbergcap.com

Final Numbers

Reproduced from BP Energy Outlook 2018; Chart: Axios Visuals

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From: jeffrey E. [jeevacation@gmail.com]
Sent: 5/13/2018 11:03:18 AM
To: [redacted]
Subject: Re: Fw: WSJ

Nothing attached

On Sun, May 13, 2018 at 7:00 AM Steve Bannon <[redacted]> wrote:

> Sent via BlackBerry by AT&T
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Alexandra Preate <[redacted]>
> **Date:** Sat, 12 May 2018 08:23:58 -0400
> **To:** <[redacted]>
> **Subject:** WSJ
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The Endless Clinton Campaign

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- POTOMAC WATCH

About That FBI ‘Source’

Did the bureau engage in outright spying against the 2016 Trump campaign?

House Intelligence Committee Chairman Devin Nunes at the Conservative Political Action Conference, Feb. 24 at National Harbor, Md. PHOTO: JOSHUA ROBERTS/REUTERS

By

Kimberley A. Strassel
May 10, 2018 6:50 p.m. ET

1663 COMMENTS

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The Department of Justice lost its latest battle with Congress Thursday when it agreed to brief House Intelligence Committee members about a top-secret intelligence source that was part of the FBI's investigation of the Trump campaign. Even without official confirmation of that source's name, the news so far holds some stunning implications.

Among them is that the Justice Department and Federal Bureau of Investigation outright hid critical information from a congressional investigation. In a Thursday press conference, Speaker Paul Ryan bluntly noted that Intelligence Chairman Devin Nunes's request for details on this secret source was "wholly appropriate," "completely within the scope" of the committee's long-running FBI investigation, and "something that probably should have been answered a while ago." Translation: The department knew full well it should have turned this material over to congressional investigators last year, but instead deliberately concealed it.

House investigators nonetheless sniffed out a name, and Mr. Nunes in recent weeks issued a letter and a subpoena demanding more details. Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein's response was to double down—accusing the House of "extortion" and delivering a speech in which he claimed that "declining to open the FBI's files to review" is a constitutional "duty." Justice asked the White House to back its stonewall. And it even began spinning that daddy of all superspook arguments—that revealing any detail about this particular asset could result in "loss of human lives."

This is desperation, and it strongly suggests that whatever is in these files is going to prove very uncomfortable to the FBI.

The bureau already has some explaining to do. Thanks to the Washington Post's unnamed law-enforcement leakers, we know Mr. Nunes's request deals with a "top secret intelligence source" of the FBI and CIA, who is a U.S. citizen and who was involved in the Russia collusion probe. When government agencies refer to sources, they mean people who appear to be average citizens but use their profession or contacts to spy for the agency. Ergo, we might take this to mean that the FBI secretly had a person on the payroll who used his or her non-FBI credentials to interact in some capacity with the Trump campaign.

This would amount to spying, and it is hugely disconcerting. It would also be a major escalation from the electronic surveillance we already knew about, which was bad enough. Obama political appointees rampantly "unmasked" Trump campaign officials to monitor their conversations, while the FBI played dirty with its surveillance warrant against Carter Page, failing to tell the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court that its supporting information came from the Hillary Clinton campaign. Now we find it may have also been rolling out human intelligence, John Le Carré style, to infiltrate the Trump campaign.

Which would lead to another big question for the FBI: When? The bureau has been doggedly sticking with its story that a tip in July 2016 about the drunken ramblings of George Papadopoulos launched its counterintelligence probe. Still, the players in this affair—the FBI, former Director Jim Comey, the Steele dossier authors—have been suspiciously vague on the key moments leading up to that launch date. When precisely was the Steele dossier delivered to the FBI? When precisely did the Papadopoulos information come in?

And to the point, when precisely was this human source operating? Because if it was prior to that infamous Papadopoulos tip, then the FBI isn't being straight. It would mean the bureau was spying on the Trump campaign prior to that moment. And that in turn would mean that the FBI had been spurred to act on the basis of something other than a junior campaign aide's loose lips.

We also know that among the Justice Department's stated reasons for not complying with the Nunes subpoena was its worry that to do so might damage international relationships. This suggests the "source" may be overseas, have ties to foreign intelligence, or both. That's notable, given the highly suspicious role foreigners have played in this escapade. It was an Australian diplomat who reported the Papadopoulos conversation. Dossier author Christopher Steele is British, used to work for MI6, and retains ties to that spy agency as well as to a network of former spooks. It was a former British diplomat who tipped off Sen. John McCain to the dossier. How this "top secret" source fits into this puzzle could matter deeply.

I believe I know the name of the informant, but my intelligence sources did not provide it to me and refuse to confirm it. It would therefore be irresponsible to publish it. But what is clear is that we've barely scratched the surface of the FBI's 2016 behavior, and the country will never get the straight story until President Trump moves to declassify everything possible. It's time to rip off the Band-Aid.

Correction

The FBI briefed House Intelligence Committee members about a top-secret intelligence source but did not allow them to see documents. An earlier version of this article misstated this.

Alexandra V. Preate
Chief Executive Officer
CapitalHQ
[redacted] cell

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To: Alan Dershowitz [[redacted]]; Martin Weinberg [[redacted]]
Subject: Fwd: Announcing the 2019 Hillman Prize winners

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From: The Sidney Hillman Foundation <[redacted]>
Date: Tue, Apr 23, 2019 at 2:45 PM

Congratulations to the 2019 Hillman Prize recipients!

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Sidney Hillman Foundation Names Winners of 2019 Prizes for Journalism in Service of the Common Good

---

Reuters, NBC News and MSNBC, ProPublica Receive Honors; Adam Serwer to receive Opinion & Analysis Prize

NEW YORK – The Sidney Hillman Foundation announced Tuesday winners of the 69th annual Hillman Prizes, recognizing a *Reuters* exposé of slum-like living conditions on U.S military bases, the *Miami Herald*'s investigation into Labor Secretary Alex Acosta's sweetheart deal with serial sex abuser, Jeffrey Epstein, and NBC News and MSNBC's reporting on the Trump Administration's family separation policy, among other standout reporting in service of the common good.

Hannah Dreier of ProPublica won a Hillman Prize for reporting that showed how the government's bungled crackdown on MS-13 has torn apart the lives of Latino immigrants. The Atlantic's Adam Serwer, who has emerged as a defining voice of the Trump era, won for his essays on racism and Trump's political movement, and Anna Clark won for her book on the Flint water crisis.

This year's prizes were judged by writer Ta-Nehisi Coates, the *New Yorker's* Jelani Cobb, *Reuters'* Alix Freedman, the *New Yorker's* Hendrik Hertzberg, the *American Prospect's* Harold Meyerson and *The Nation's* Katrina vanden Heuvel.

The 2019 winners of the Hillman Prizes are:

- **Newspaper** – *Miami Herald*, Julie K. Brown and Emily Michot: *Perversion of Justice*
- **Magazine** – *ProPublica* with *New York* magazine*, Newsday, This American Life, New York Times Magazine,* Hannah Dreier: *Trapped in Gangland*
- **Web** – *Reuters,* Joshua Schneyer, Michael Pell, Andrea Januta, Deborah Nelson: *Ambushed at Home*
- **Broadcast** – NBC News and MSNBC, Jacob Soboroff and Julia Ainsley: *Torn Apart: Crisis at the Border*
- **Opinion & Analysis** – Adam Serwer, *The Atlantic*
- **Book** – Anna Clark: *The Poisoned City: Flint's Water and the American Urban Tragedy,* Metropolitan Books

Reporting by this year's prize winners has had significant positive impact, including:

- Reversal of the Trump administration's "Zero Tolerance" family separation policy
- Three federal investigations, new legislation, widespread repairs, and a $386 million emergency program to inspect military housing for hazards
- The exposure of pervasive bias and negligence by Long Island police, leading to federal and local investigations and reforms

This year's honorees follow in the trailblazing tradition of past winners ranging from Murray Kempton in 1950 for his articles on labor in the south and Edward R. Murrow in 1954 for his critical reports on civil liberties and Joseph McCarthy at the height of the Red Scare; to 2017 newspaper winner, David Fahrenthold, for exposing Donald Trump's sexual harassment and mismanagement of his foundation.

The Hillman Prizes are open to journalists and subjects globally for any work widely accessible to a U.S. audience. Winners will be awarded a $5,000 prize at the Hillman Foundation's annual

ceremony in New York City on May 7.

"In a time when this country's highest powers have taken it as their business to demean the work of journalists, it is particularly significant for us to honor those who have taken up the tools of journalism to challenge corrupt power wherever it may reside," said Hillman judge Ta-Nehisi Coates.

In 2011, the Sidney Hillman Foundation inaugurated the Canadian Hillman Prize. This year's winners, Harvey Cashore, Bob McKeown and Kimberly Ivany of CBC's The Fifth Estate, won for their sweeping investigation into the research and regulatory failures that have put millions of children at risk on their way to and from school each day. Their reporting exposed fraudulent science behind Transport Canada's seminal seatbelt study and led the Transport Minister to form a task force with the provinces to look at implementing seatbelts on school buses across the country.

The Hillman Foundation announced Monday that CUNY professor and historian, Joshua B. Freeman, is the recipient of its 2019 Sol Stetin Award for Labor History. Freeman has written extensively about the history of labor, industry, modern America, and New York City. The Hillman Foundation established the award in 2005 to honor a labor historian who has made significant contribution to the field, researching and telling the stories of working peoples' lives.

Since 1950, the Hillman's Prizes for Journalism honor the legacy of Sidney Hillman, an immigrant who dedicated his life to a "better America." Hillman believed that a free press was essential to a fair and equal society. The Sidney Hillman Foundation has sought to carry on his legacy by honoring journalists who illuminate the great issues of our times—from the search for a basis for lasting peace, to the need for better housing, medical care, and employment security for all people, to the promotion of civil liberties and the battle against discrimination based on race, nationality, or religion.

For more information, including to RSVP to the event, please contact Alexandra Lescaze at 646-448-6413 or Alex@HillmanFoundation.org

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SIEGE

Trump Under Fire

MICHAEL
WOLFF

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY
NEW YORK

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Author's Note

Shortly after Donald Trump's inauguration as the forty-fifth president of the United States, I was allowed into the West Wing as a sideline observer. My book *Fire and Fury* was the resulting account of the organizational chaos and constant drama—more psychodrama than political drama—of Trump's first seven months in office. Here was a volatile and uncertain president, releasing, almost on a daily basis, his strange furies on the world, and, at the same time, on his own staff. This first phase of the most abnormal White House in American history ended in August 2017, with the departure of chief strategist Stephen K. Bannon and the appointment of retired general John Kelly as chief of staff.

This new account begins in February 2018 at the outset of Trump's second year in office, with the situation now profoundly altered. The president's capricious furies have been met by an increasingly organized and methodical institutional response. The wheels of justice are inexorably turning against him. In many ways, his own government, even his own White House, has begun to turn on him. Virtually every power center left of the far-right wing has deemed him unfit. Even some among his own base find him undependable, hopelessly distracted, and in over his head. Never before has a president been under such concerted attack with such a limited capacity to defend himself.

His enemies surround him, dedicated to bringing him down.

* * *

I am joined in my train-wreck fascination with Trump—that certain knowledge that in the end he will destroy himself—by, I believe, almost everyone who has encountered him since he was elected president. To have worked anywhere near him is to be confronted with the most extreme and disorienting behavior possible. That is hardly an overstatement. Not only is Trump not like other presidents, he is not like anyone most of us have ever known. Hence, everyone who has been close to him feels compelled to try to explain him and to dine out on his head-smacking peculiarities. It is yet one more of his handicaps: all the people around him, however much they are bound by promises of confidentiality or nondisclosure agreements or even friendship, cannot stop talking about their experience with him. In this sense, he is more exposed than any president in history.

Many of the people in the White House who helped me during the writing of *Fire and Fury* are now outside of the administration, yet they are as engaged as ever by the Trump saga. I am grateful to be part of this substantial network. Many of Trump's pre–White House cronies continue to both listen to him and support him; at the same time, as an expression both of their concern and of their incredulity, they report among one another, and to others as well, on his temper, mood, and impulses. In general, I have found that the closer people are to him, the more alarmed they have found themselves at various points about his mental state. They all speculate about how this will end—badly for him, they almost all conclude. Indeed, Trump is probably a much better subject for writers interested in human capacities and failings than for most of the reporters and writers who regularly cover Washington and who are primarily interested in the pursuit of success and power.

My primary goal in *Siege* is to create a readable and intuitive narrative—that is its nature. Another goal is to write the near equivalent of a real-time history of this extraordinary moment, since understanding it well after the fact might be too late. A final goal is pure portraiture: Donald Trump as an extreme, almost hallucinatory, and certainly cautionary, American character. To accomplish this, to gain the perspective and to find the voices necessary to tell the larger story, I provided anonymity to any source who requested it. In cases where I have been told—on the promise of no attribution—about an unreported event or private conversation or remark, I have made every effort to confirm it with other sources or documents. In some cases, I have witnessed the events or conversations described herein. With regard to the Mueller investigation, the narrative I provide is based on internal documents given to me by sources close to the Office of the Special Counsel.

Dealing with sources in the Trump White House has continued to offer its own set of unique issues. A basic requirement of working there is, surely, the willingness to infinitely rationalize or delegitimize the truth, and, when necessary, to outright lie. In fact, I believe this has caused some of the same people who have undermined the public trust to become private truth-tellers. This is their devil's bargain. But for the writer, interviewing such Janus-faced sources creates a dilemma, for it requires depending on people who lie to also tell the truth—and who might later disavow the truth they have told. Indeed, the extraordinary nature of much of what has happened in the Trump White House is often baldly denied by its spokespeople, as well as by the president himself. Yet in each successive account of this administration, the level of its preposterousness—even as that bar has been consistently raised—has almost invariably been confirmed.

In an atmosphere that promotes, and frequently demands, hyperbole, tone itself becomes a key part of accuracy. For instance, most crucially, the president, by a wide range of the people in close contact with him, is often described in maximal terms of mental instability. "I have never met anyone crazier than Donald Trump" is the wording of one staff member who has spent almost countless hours with the president. Something like this has been expressed to me by a dozen others with firsthand experience. How do you translate that into a responsible evaluation of this singular White House? My strategy is to try to show and not tell, to describe the broadest context, to communicate the experience, to make it real enough for a reader to evaluate for him- or herself where Donald Trump falls on a vertiginous sliding scale of human behavior. It is that condition, an emotional state rather than a political state, that is at the heart of this book.

1

BULLSEYE

The president made his familiar stink-in-the-room face, then wav his hands as though to ward off a bug.

"Don't tell me this," he said. "Why are you telling me this?"

His personal lawyer John Dowd, in late February 2018, little mo than a year into Trump's tenure, was trying to explain that prosecutc were likely to issue a subpoena for some of the Trump Organizatio business records.

Trump seemed to respond less to the implications of such a deep di into his affairs than to having to hear about it at all. His annoyance set a small rant. It was not so much about people out to get him—and pe ple were surely out to get him—but that nobody was defending him. T problem was his own people. Especially his lawyers.

Trump wanted his lawyers to "fix" things. "Don't bring me problem bring me solutions," was a favorite CEO bromide that he often repeate He judged his lawyers by their under-the-table or sleight-of-hand ski and held them accountable when they could not make problems disa pear. His problems became *their* fault. "Make it go away" was one of frequent orders. It was often said in triplicate: "Make it go away, make go away, make it go away."

The White House counsel Don McGahn—representing the Whi

House rather than, in a distinction Trump could never firmly grasp, the president himself—demonstrated little ability to make problems disappear and became a constant brunt of Trump's rages and invective. His legal interpretation of proper executive branch function too often thwarted his boss's wishes.

Dowd and his colleagues, Ty Cobb and Jay Sekulow—the trio of lawyers charged with navigating the president through his personal legal problems—had, on the other hand, become highly skilled in avoiding their client's bad humor, which was often accompanied by menacing, barely controlled personal attacks. All three men understood that to be a successful lawyer for Donald Trump was to tell the client what he wanted to hear.

Trump harbored a myth about the ideal lawyer that had almost nothing to do with the practice of law. He invariably cited Roy Cohn, his old New York friend, attorney, and tough-guy mentor, and Robert Kennedy, John F. Kennedy's brother. "He was always on my ass about Roy Cohn and Bobby Kennedy," said Steve Bannon, the political strategist who, perhaps more than anyone else, was responsible for Trump's victory. "'Roy Cohn and Bobby Kennedy,' he would say. 'Where's my Roy Cohn and Bobby Kennedy?'" Cohn, to his own benefit and legend, built the myth that Trump continued to embrace: with enough juice and muscle, the legal system could always be gamed. Bobby Kennedy had been his brother's attorney general and hatchet man; he protected JFK and worked the back channels of power for the benefit of the family.

This was the constant Trump theme: beating the system. "I'm the guy who gets away with it," he had often bragged to friends in New York.

At the same time, he did not want to know details. He merely wanted his lawyers to assure him that he was winning. "We're killing it, right? That's what I want to know. That's *all* I want to know. If we're not killing it, you screwed up," he shouted one afternoon at members of his ad hoc legal staff.

From the start, it had become a particular challenge to find top lawyers to take on what, in the past, had always been one of the most vaunted of legal assignments: representing the president of the United States. One high-profile Washington white-collar litigator gave Trump a list of twenty

issues that would immediately need to be addressed if he were to ta
on the case. Trump refused to consider any of them. More than a doz
major firms had turned down his business. In the end, Trump was left wi
a ragtag group of solo practitioners without the heft and resources of t
firms. Now, thirteen months after his inauguration, he was facing p
sonal legal trouble at least as great as that faced by Richard Nixon and E
Clinton, and doing so with what seemed like, at best, a Court Street le
team. But Trump appeared to be oblivious to this exposed flank. Ratch
ing up his level of denial about the legal threats around him, he breez
rationalized: "If I had good lawyers, I'd look guilty."

Dowd, at seventy-seven, had had a long, successful legal career, bc
in government and in Washington law firms. But that was in the past. I
was on his own now, eager to postpone retirement. He knew the imp
tance, certainly to his own position in Trump's legal circle, of und
standing his client's needs. He was forced to agree with the presider
assessment of the investigation into his campaign's contact with Russi
state interests: it would not reach him. To that end, Dowd, and the ot
members of Trump's legal team, recommended that the president coo
erate with the Mueller investigation.

"I'm not a target, right?" Trump constantly prodded them.

This wasn't a rhetorical question. He insisted on an answer, and
affirmative one: "Mr. President, you're not a target." Early in his tenu
Trump had pushed FBI director James Comey to provide precisely t
reassurance. In one of the signature moves of his presidency, he had fir
Comey in May 2017 in part because he wasn't satisfied with the enth
siasm of the affirmation and therefore assumed Comey was plotti
against him.

Whether the president was indeed a target—and it would surely ha
taken a through-the-looking-glass exercise not to see him as the bulls
of the Mueller investigation—seemed to occupy a separate reality fr
Trump's need to be reassured that he was not a target.

"Trump's trained me," Ty Cobb told Steve Bannon. "Even if it's b
it's great."

Trump imagined—indeed, with a preternatural confidence, nothi
appeared to dissuade him—that sometime in the very near future he wo

hear directly from the special counsel, who would send him a comprehensive and even apologetic letter of exoneration.

"Where," he kept demanding to know, "is my fucking letter?"

* * *

The grand jury empanelled by Special Counsel Robert Mueller met on Thursdays and Fridays in federal district court in Washington. Its business was conducted on the fifth floor of an unremarkable building at 333 Constitution Avenue. The grand jurors gathered in a nondescript space that looked less like a courtroom than a classroom, with prosecutors at a podium and witnesses sitting at a desk in the front of the room. The Mueller grand jurors were more female than male, more white than black, older rather than younger; they were distinguished most of all by their focus and intensity. They listened to the proceedings with "a scary sort of attention, as though they already know everything," said one witness.

In a grand jury inquiry, you fall into one of three categories. You are a "witness of fact," meaning the prosecutor believes you have information about an investigation at hand. Or you are a "subject," meaning you are regarded as having personal involvement with the crime under investigation. Or, most worrisome, you are a "target," meaning the prosecutor is seeking to have the grand jury indict you. Witnesses often became subjects, and subjects often became targets.

In early 2018, with the Mueller investigation and its grand jury maintaining a historic level of secrecy, no one in the White House could be sure who was what. Or who was saying what to whom. Anyone and everyone working for the president or one of his senior aides could be talking to the special counsel. The investigation's code of silence extended into the West Wing. Nobody knew, and nobody was saying, who was spilling the beans.

Almost every White House senior staffer—the collection of advisers who had firsthand dealings with the president—had retained a lawyer. Indeed, from the president's first days in the White House, Trump's tangled legal past and evident lack of legal concern had cast a shadow on those who worked for him. Senior people were looking for lawyers even as they were still learning how to navigate the rabbit warren that is the West Wing.

In February 2017, mere weeks after the inauguration, and not long

after the FBI had first raised questions about National Security Adv
Michael Flynn, Chief of Staff Reince Priebus had walked into Steve
non's office and said, "I'm going to do you a big favor. Give me your c
card. Don't ask me why, just give it to me. You'll be thanking me fo
rest of your life."

Bannon opened his wallet and gave Priebus his American Exp
card. Priebus shortly returned, handed the card back, and said, "You have legal insurance."

Over the next year, Bannon—a witness of fact—spent hundre
hours with his lawyers preparing for his testimony before the sp
counsel and before Congress. His lawyers in turn spent ever moun
hours talking to Mueller's team and to congressional committee coun
Bannon's legal costs at the end of the year came to $2 million.

Every lawyer's first piece of advice to his or her client was blunt
unequivocal: talk to no one, lest it become necessary to testify about
you said. Before long, a constant preoccupation of senior staffers in
Trump White House was to know as little as possible. It was a wr
side-up world: where being "in the room" was traditionally the
sought-after status, now you wanted to stay out of meetings. You wa
to avoid being a witness to conversations; you wanted to avoid b
witnessed being a witness to conversations, at least if you were sn
Certainly, nobody was your friend. It was impossible to know whe
colleague stood in the investigation; hence, you had no way of kno
how likely it was that they might need to offer testimony about som
else—you, perhaps—as the bargaining chip to save themselves by c
erating with the special counsel, a.k.a. flipping.

The White House, it rapidly dawned on almost everyone who wo
there—even as it became one more reason *not* to work there—was
scene of an ongoing criminal investigation, one that could potent
ensnare anyone who was anywhere near it.

* * *

The ultimate keeper of the secrets from the campaign, the transition, through the first year in the White House was Hope Hicks, the W
House communications director. She had witnessed most everyth

She saw what the president saw: she knew what the president, a man unable to control his own running monologue, knew.

On February 27, 2018, testifying before the House Intelligence Committee—she had already appeared before the special counsel—she was pressed about whether she had ever lied for the president. Perhaps a more accomplished communications professional could have escaped the corner here, but Hicks, who had scant experience other than working as Donald Trump's spokesperson, which, as often as not, meant dealing with his disregard of empirical truth, found herself as though in a sudden and unexpected moral void trying to publicly parse the relative importance of her boss's lies. She admitted to telling "white lies," as in, somehow, less than the biggest lies. This was enough of a forward admission to require a nearly twenty-minute mid-testimony conference with her lawyers, distressed by what she might be admitting and by where any deconstruction of the president's constant inversions might lead.

Not long after she testified, another witness before the Mueller grand jury was asked how far Hicks might go to lie for the president. The witness answered: "I think when it comes to doing anything as a 'yes man' for Trump, she'll do it—but she won't take a bullet for him." The statement could be taken as both a backhanded compliment and an estimate of how far loyalty in the Trump White House might extend—probably not too far.

Almost no one in Trump's administration, it could be argued, was conventionally suited to his or her job. But with the possible exception of the president himself, no one provided a better illustration of this unprepared and uninformed presidency than Hicks. She did not have substantial media or political experience, nor did she have a temperament annealed by years of high-pressure work. Always dressed in the short skirts that Trump favored, she seemed invariably caught in the headlights. Trump admired her not because she had the political skills to protect him, but for her pliant dutifulness. Her job was to devote herself to his care and feeding.

"When you speak to him, open with positive feedback," counseled Hicks, understanding Trump's need for constant affirmation and his almost complete inability to talk about anything but himself. Her attentiveness to Trump and tractable nature had elevated her, at age twenty-nine, to the top White House communications job. And practically speaking, she acted as his de facto chief of staff. Trump did not want his administration to be staffed by professionals; he wanted it to be staffed by people who attended and catered to him.

Hicks—"Hope-y," to Trump—was both the president's gatekeeper and his comfort blanket. She was also a frequent subject of his prurient interest: Trump preferred business, even in the White House, to be personal. "Who's fucking Hope?" he would demand to know. The topic also interested his son Don Jr., who often professed his intention to "fuck Hope." The president's daughter Ivanka and her husband, Jared Kushner, both White House senior advisers, expressed a gentler type of concern for Hicks; sometimes they would even try to suggest eligible men.

But Hicks, seeming to understand the insular nature of Trumpworld, dated exclusively inside the bubble, picking the baddest boys in it: campaign manager Corey Lewandowski during the campaign and presidential aide Rob Porter in the White House. As the relationship between Hicks and Porter unfolded in the fall of 2017, knowing about the affair became an emblem of Trump insiderness, with special care taken to keep this development from the proprietary president. Or not: other people, assuming that Porter's involvement with Hicks would not at all please Trump, were less than discreet about it.

* * *

In the heightened enmity of the Trump White House, Rob Porter may have succeeded in becoming the most disliked person by everyone except perhaps the president himself. A square-jawed, 1950s-looking guy who could have been a model for Brylcreem, he was almost a laughable figure of betrayal and perfidy: if he *hadn't* stabbed you in the back, you would be forced to acknowledge how unworthy he considered you to be. A sitcom sort of suck-up—"Eddie Haskell," cracked Bannon, citing the early television icon of insincerity and brownnosing featured in *Leave It to Beaver*—he embraced Chief of Staff John Kelly, while at the same time poisoning him with the president. Porter's estimation of his own high responsibilities in the White House, together with the senior-most jobs that the president, he let it be known, was promising him, seemed to put the administration and the nation squarely on his shoulders.

Porter had, before the age of forty, two bitter ex-wives, at least one of whom he had beaten, and both of whom he had cheated on at talk-of-the-town levels. During a stint as a Senate staffer, the married Porter had an affair with an intern, costing him his job. His girlfriend Samantha Dravis had moved in with Porter in the summer of 2017, while, quite unbeknownst to her, he was seeing Hicks. "I cheated on you because you're not attractive enough," he later told Dravis.

In a potentially criminal break of protocol, Porter had gained access to his raw FBI clearance reports and seen the statements of his ex-wives. His most recent ex-wife had also written a blog about his alleged abuse, which, while it did not name him, clearly fingered him. Concerned about the damaging impact his former wives could have on his security review, he recruited Dravis to help him smooth his relationship with both women.

Lewandowski, Hicks's former boyfriend, caught wind of the Hicks-Porter relationship and began working to expose it; by some reports, he got paparazzi to follow Hicks. Though Porter's history of abuse was slowly making its way to the surface as a result of the FBI investigation, the Lewandowski campaign against Hicks cut through many other efforts to cover up Porter's transgressions.

Dravis, in the autumn of 2017, heard the Lewandowski-pushed rumors of the Hicks-Porter relationship. After finding Hicks's number listed under a man's name in Porter's contacts, Dravis confronted Porter, who promptly threw her out. Moving back in with her parents, she began her own revenge campaign, openly talking about Porter's security clearance issues, including to people inside the White House counsel's office, saying he had protection at the highest levels in the White House. Then, along with Lewandowski, Dravis helped leak the details of the Hicks-Porter romance to the *Daily Mail*, which published a story about it on February 1.

But Dravis, joined by Porter's former wives, decided that, outrageously, he had come out looking *good* in the *Daily Mail* account—he was part of a glam power couple! Porter called Dravis to taunt her: "You thought you could get me!" Dravis and his former wives all then publicly revealed their abuse at his hand. His first wife said he kicked and punched her; she even produced a photograph of her black eye. His second wife

informed the media that she had filed an emergency protective orc against him.

The White House, or at least Kelly—and likely Hicks—had been awa of many of these claims and, effectively, covered them up. ("You usua have enough competent people for White House positions to weed out t wife beaters, but you couldn't be so choosy in the Trump White House," sa one Republican acquaintance of Porter's.) The furor that erupted arou Porter and his troubling gross-guy history not only annoyed Trump "He stinks of bad press"—it further weakened Kelly. On February 7, af both of his former wives gave interviews to CNN, Porter resigned.

A publicity-shy Hicks—Donald Trump put a high value on associa who did not steal his press opportunities—suddenly found her love l in the glare of intense international press scrutiny. Her affair with the d credited Porter highlighted her own odd relationship with the preside and his family, as well as the haphazard management, interpersonal d functions, and general lack of political savvy in the Trump court.

* * *

The affair was, curiously, among the least of Hicks's problems. Indeed, Hicks the Porter scandal became perhaps a *better* cloud under which leave the administration than what almost everybody in the West Wi assumed was the real cloud.

On February 27, a reporter at the Washington insider newsletter *Axi* Jonathan Swan, a favorite conduit for White House leaks, reported tl Josh Raffel was leaving the White House. In a novel arrangement, Raf had come into the White House in April 2017 as the exclusive spokespers for the president's son-in-law Jared Kushner, and his wife, Ivanka, bypa ing the White House communications team. Raffel, who, like Kushn was a Democrat, had worked for Hiltzik Strategies, the New York pub relations firm that represented Ivanka's clothing line.

Hope Hicks, who had also worked for the Hiltzik firm—perhaps b known for having long represented the film producer Harvey Weinste caught, in the fall of 2017, in an epochal harassment and abuse scan and cover-up—had originally had the same role as Raffel but at a high level: she was the personal spokesperson for the president. In Septemb

Hicks had been elevated to White House communications director, with Raffel as her number two.

The trouble had arisen the previous summer. Both Hicks and Raffel had been on Air Force One in July 2017 as the news broke about Donald Trump Jr.'s meeting in Trump Tower during the campaign with Russian government go-betweens offering dirt on Hillary Clinton. During the flight back to the United States after the G20 summit in Germany, Hicks and Raffel aided the president in his efforts to issue a largely false story about the Trump Tower meeting, thus becoming part of the cover-up.

Even though Raffel had been at the White House for a little more than nine months, the *Axios* report said that his departure had been under discussion for several months. That was untrue. It was an abrupt exit.

The next day, just as abruptly, Hope Hicks—the person in the White House closest to the president—resigned as well.

The one person who perhaps knew more than anyone else about the workings of the Trump campaign and the Trump White House was suddenly out the door. The profound concern inside the White House was the reasonable supposition that Hicks and Raffel, both witnesses to and participants in the president's efforts to cover up the details of his son and son-in-law's meeting with the Russians, were subjects or targets of the Mueller investigation—or, worse, had already cut a deal.

The president, effusive in his public praise for Hicks, did not try to talk her out of leaving. In the weeks to come he would mope about her absence—"Where's my Hope-y?"—but, in fact, as soon as he got wind that she might be talking, he wanted to cut her loose and began, in a significant rewrite, downgrading her status and importance on the campaign and in the White House.

Yet here, from Trump's point of view, was a hopeful point about Hicks: as central as she was to his presidency, her duties really only consisted of pleasing him. She was an unlikely agent of grand strategy and great conspiracies. Trump's team was made up of only bit players.

* * *

John Dowd may have been reluctant to give his client bad news, but he well understood the danger of a thorough prosecutor with virtually

unlimited resources. The more a determined team of G-men sifts, stri
and inspects, the greater the chance that both methodical and casu
crimes will be revealed. The more comprehensive the search, the mo
inevitable the outcome. The case of Donald Trump—with his history
bankruptcies, financial legerdemain, dubious associations, and gene
sense of impunity—certainly seemed to offer prosecutors something
an embarrassment of riches.

For his part, however, Donald Trump yet seemed to believe that h
skills and instincts were at least a match for all the thoroughness a
resources of the United States Department of Justice. He even believ
their exhaustive approach would work in his favor. "Boring. Confusi
for everybody," he said, dismissing the reports of the investigation pr
vided by Dowd and others. "You can't follow any of this. No hook."

One of the many odd aspects of Trump's presidency was that
did not see being president, either the responsibilities or the exposu
as being all that different from his pre-presidential life. He had endur
almost countless investigations in his long career. He had been involv
in various kinds of litigation for the better part of forty-five years. He w
a fighter who, with brazenness and aggression, got out of fixes that wou
have ruined a weaker, less wily player. That was his essential busin
strategy: what doesn't kill me strengthens me. Though he was wound
again and again, he never bled out.

"It's playing the game," he explained in one of his frequent mon
logues about his own superiority and everyone else's stupidity. "I'm go
at the game. Maybe I'm the best. Really, I could be the best. I think I a
the best. I'm very good. Very cool. Most people are afraid that the wo
might happen. But it doesn't, unless you're stupid. And I'm not stupid."

In the weeks after his first anniversary in office, with the Muel
investigation in its eighth month, Trump continued to regard the sp
cial counsel's inquiry as a contest of wills. He did not see it as a war
attrition—a gradual reduction of the strength and credibility of the t
get through sustained scrutiny and increasing pressure. Instead, he sa
situation to confront, a spurious government undertaking that was v
nerable to his attacks. He was confident he could jawbone this "wi
hunt"—often tweeted in all-caps—to at least a partisan draw.

He remained irritated by efforts to persuade him to play the game in the usual Washington way—mounting a disciplined legal defense, negotiating, trying to cut his losses—rather than his way. This was disconcerting to many of the people closest to him, but it alarmed them more to see that as Trump's indignation and sense of personal insult rose, so did his belief in his own innocence.

* * *

By the end of February, in addition to the Mueller grand jury indictments of a group of Russian nationals for illegal activities involved with efforts by the Russian government to influence the U.S. election, Mueller had reached several levels into the Trump circle. Among those who were indicted or who had pled guilty to felonies were his former campaign manager Paul Manafort, his former national security advisor Michael Flynn, the eager-beaver junior adviser George Papadopoulos, and Manafort's business partner and campaign official Rick Gates. This series of legal moves could be classically read as a methodical, step-by-step approach to the president's door. Or, from the Trump camp's point of view, it could be seen as a roundup of the sorts of opportunists and hangers-on who had always trailed Trump.

The doubts about the usefulness of Trump's hangers-on was an implicit part of their usefulness: they could be shrugged off and disavowed at any time, which is what promptly happened at the least sign of trouble. The Trumpers swept up by Mueller were all declared wannabe and marginal players. The president had never met them, could not remember them, or had a limited acquaintance with them. "I know Mr. Manafort—I haven't spoken to him in a long time, but I know him," declared a dismissive Trump, pulling a line from the "who dat?" page of his playbook.

The difficulty in proving a conspiracy is proving intent. Many of the president's inner circle believed that Trump, and the Trump Organization, and by extension the Trump campaign, operated in such a diffuse, haphazard, gang-that-couldn't-shoot-straight manner that intent would be very difficult to establish. What's more, the Trump hangers-on were so demonstrably subpar players that stupidity could well be a reasonable defense against intent.

Many in the Trump circle agreed with their boss: they believed tha
whatever idiotic moves had been made by idiotic Trump hands, the Russia investigation was too abstruse and nickel-and-dime to ultimately stick
At the same time, many, and perhaps all, were privately convinced tha
a deep dive—or, for that matter, even a cursory inspection—of Trump'
financial past would yield a trove of overt offenses, and likely a pattern o
career corruption.

It was hardly surprising, then, that ever since the beginning of th
special counsel's investigation, Trump had tried to draw a line in the san
between Mueller and Trump family finances, openly threatening Muelle
if he went there. Trump's operating assumption remained that the specia
counsel was afraid of him, conscious of where and how his toleranc
might end. Trump was confident that the Mueller team could be made t
understand its limits, by either wink-wink or unsubtle threat.

"They know they can't get me," he told one member of his circl
of after-dinner callers, "because I was never involved. I'm not a targe
There's nothing. I'm not a target. They've told me, I'm not a target. An
they know what would happen if they made me a target. Everybod
understands everybody."

* * *

Books and newspaper stories about Trump's forty-five years in busine
were full of his shady dealings, and his arrival in the White House on
helped to highlight them and surface even juicier ones. Real estate w
the world's favorite money-laundering currency, and Trump's B-level re
estate business—relentlessly marketed by Trump as triple A—was qui
explicitly designed to appeal to money launderers. What's more, Trum
own financial woes, and desperate efforts to maintain his billionaire lif
style, cachet, and market viability, forced him into constant and unsubt
schemes. In the high irony department, Jared Kushner, when he was
law school, and before he met Ivanka, identified, in a paper he wro
possible claims of fraud against the Trump Organization in a particul
real estate deal he was studying—a subject now of quite some amuseme
among his acquaintances at the time. Practically speaking, Trump hid
plain sight, as the prosecutors appeared to be finding.

In November 2004, for instance, Jeffrey Epstein, the financier later caught in a scandal involving underage prostitutes, agreed to purchase from bankruptcy a house in Palm Beach, Florida, for $36 million, a property that had been on the market for two years. Epstein and Trump had been close friends—playboys in arms, as it were—for more than a decade, with Trump often seeking Epstein's help with his chaotic financial affairs. Soon after negotiating the deal for the house in Palm Beach, Epstein took Trump to see it, looking for advice on construction issues involved with moving the swimming pool. But as he prepared to finalize his purchase for the house, Epstein discovered that Trump, who was severely cash-constrained at the time, had bid $41 million for the property and bought it out from under Epstein through an entity called Trump Properties LLC, entirely financed by Deutsche Bank, which was already carrying a substantial number of troubled loans to the Trump Organization and to Trump personally.

Trump, Epstein knew, had been loaning out his name in real estate deals—that is, for an ample fee, Trump would serve as a front man to disguise the actual ownership in a real estate transaction. (This was, in a sense, another variation of Trump's basic business model of licensing his name for commercial properties owned by someone else.) A furious Epstein, certain that Trump was merely fronting for the real owners, threatened to expose the deal, which was getting extensive coverage in Florida papers. The fight became all the more bitter when, not long after the purchase, Trump put the house on the market for $125 million.

But if Epstein knew some of Trump's secrets, Trump knew some of Epstein's. Trump often saw the financier at Epstein's current Palm Beach house, and Trump knew that Epstein was visited almost every day, and had been for many years, by girls he'd hired to give him massages that often had happy endings—girls recruited from local restaurants, strip clubs, and, also, Trump's own Mar-a-Lago. Just as the enmity between the two friends increased over the house purchase, Epstein found himself under investigation by the Palm Beach police. And as Epstein's legal problems escalated, the house, with only minor improvements, was acquired for $96 million by Dmitry Rybolovlev, an oligarch who was part of the close Putin circle of government-aligned industrialists in Russia, and who, in fact, never moved into the house. Trump had, miraculously, earned $55 million without putting up a dime. Or, more likely, Trump merely earned a fee for hiding the real owner—a shadow owner quite possibly being funneled cash by Rybolovlev for other reasons beyond the value of the house. Or, possibly, the real owner and real buyer were one and the same. Rybolovlev might have, in effect, paid himself for the house, thereby cleansing the additional $55 million for the second purchase of the house.

This was Donald Trump's world of real estate.

* * *

As though using mind-control tricks, Jared Kushner had become highly skilled at containing his deep frustration with his father-in-law. He stayed expressionless—sometimes he seemed almost immobile—when Trump went off the rails, unleashing tantrums or proposing dopey political or policy moves. Kushner, a courtier in a crazy court, was possessed of an eerie calmness and composure. He was also very worried. It seemed astounding and ludicrous that this fig-leaf technicality—"You're not a target, Mr. President"—could offer his father-in-law such comfort.

Kushner understood that Trump was surrounded by a set of mortal arrows, any of which might kill him: the case for obstruction; the case for collusion; any close look at his long, dubious financial history; the always-lurking issues with women; the prospects of a midterm rout and the impeachment threat if the midterm elections went against them; the fickleness of the Republicans, who might at any time turn on him; and the senior staffers who had been pushed out of the administration (Kushner had urged the ouster of many of them), any of whom might testify against him. In March alone, Gary Cohn, the president's chief economic adviser, Rex Tillerson, the secretary of state, and Andrew McCabe, the deputy director of the FBI—each man bearing the president deep contempt—were pushed from the administration.

But the president was in no mood to hear Kushner's counsel. Never entirely trusted by his father-in-law—in truth, Trump trusted no one except, arguably, his daughter Ivanka, Kushner's wife—Kushner now found himself decidedly on the wrong side of Trump's red line of loyalty.

As a family insider, Kushner, in a game of court politics so vicious that, in another time, it might have yielded murder plots, had appeared to triumph over his early White House rivals. But Trump invariably soured on the people who worked for him, just as they soured on him, not least because he nearly always came to believe that his staff was profiting at his expense. He was convinced that everyone was greedy, and that sooner or later they would try to take what was more rightfully his. Increasingly, it seemed that Kushner, too, might be just another staff member trying to take advantage of Donald Trump.

Trump had recently learned that a prominent New York investment fund, Apollo Global Management, led by the financier Leon Black, had provided the Kushner Companies—the family real estate group that had been managed by Kushner himself while his father, Charlie, was in federal prison—with $184 million in financing.

This was troubling on many levels, and it left a vulnerable Kushner open to more questions about the conflicts between his business and his position in the White House. During the transition, Kushner had offered Apollo's cofounder Marc Rowan, the job of director of the Office of Management and Budget. Rowan initially accepted the job, declining it only after Apollo chairman Leon Black objected to what would have to be disclosed about Rowan's and the firm's investments.

But the president-elect's concerns were elsewhere: he was more keenly and furiously focused on the fact that, in the constant search for financings that occur in mid-tier real estate companies like Trump's, Apollo had never extended itself for the Trump Organization. Now, it seemed baldly apparent, Apollo was backing the Kushners solely because of the family's connection to the administration. The constant accounting in Trump's head of who was profiting from whom, and his sense of what he was therefore owed for creating the circumstances by which everyone could profit, was one of the things that reliably kept him up at night.

"You think I don't know what's going on?" Trump sneered at his daughter, one of the few people he usually went out of his way to try to mollify. *"You think I don't know what's going on?"*

The Kushners had gained. He had not.

The president's daughter pleaded her husband's case. She spoke of the

incredible sacrifice the couple had made by coming to Washington. A
for what? "Our lives have been destroyed," she said melodramatically
and yet with some considerable truth. The former New York sociali
had been reduced to potential criminal defendants and media laughi
stocks.

After a year of friends and advisers whispering that his daughter a
son-in-law were at the root of the disarray in the White House, Tru
once again was thinking they should never have come. Revising histo
he told various of his late-night callers that he had *always* thought t
never should have come. Over his daughter's bitter protests, he declin
to intercede in his son-in-law's security clearance issues. The FBI h
continued to hold up Kushner's clearance—which the president, at
discretion, could approve, his daughter reminded him. But Trump
nothing, letting his son-in-law dangle in the wind.

Kushner, with superhuman patience and resolve, waited for his opp
tunity. The trick among Trump whisperers was how to focus Tru
attention, since Trump could never be counted on to participate in a
thing like a normal conversation with reasonable back-and-forth. Sp
and women were reliable subjects; both would immediately engage h
Disloyalty also got Trump's attention. So did conspiracies. And mone
always money.

* * *

Kushner's own lawyer was Abbe Lowell, a well-known showboat of
D.C. criminal bar who prided himself on, and managed his clients' exp
tations and attention with, an up-to-the-minute menu of rumors
insights about what gambit or strategy prosecutors were about to dish
The true edge provided by a high-profile litigator was perhaps not co
room skill but backroom intelligence.

Lowell, adding to the reports Dowd had received, told Kushner
prosecutors were about to substantially deepen the president's—and
Trump family's—jeopardy. Dowd had continued to try to mollify the pr
dent, but Kushner, with intel supplied by Lowell, went to his father-in-law
reports about this new front in the legal war against him. Sure enough
March 15 the news broke that the special counsel had issued a subpo

for the Trump Organization records: it was a deep and encompassing order, reaching many years back.

Kushner also warned his father-in-law that the investigation was about to spill over from the Mueller team, with its narrow focus on Russian collusion, to the Southern District of New York—that is, the federal prosecutor's office in Manhattan—which would not be restricted to the Russia probe. This was a work-around intended to circumvent the special counsel's restriction to Russia-related matters, but also an effort by the Mueller team to short-circuit any attempt by the president to disband or curtail its investigation. By moving parts of the investigation to the Southern District, Mueller, as Kushner explained to Trump, was ensuring that the investigation of the president would continue even without the special counsel. Mueller was playing a canny, or ass-protecting, game, while also following precise procedures: even as he focused on the limited area of his investigation, he was divvying up evidence of other possible crimes and sending it out to other jurisdictions, all of which were eager to be part of the hunt.

It gets worse, Kushner told Trump.

The Southern District was once run by Trump's friend Rudy Giuliani, the former mayor of New York. In the 1980s, when Giuliani was the federal prosecutor—and when, curiously, James Comey had worked for him—the Southern District became the premier prosecutor of the Mafia and of Wall Street. Giuliani had pioneered using a draconian, and many believed unconstitutional, interpretation of the RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) Act against the Mob. He used the same interpretation against big finance, and in 1990 the threat of a RICO indictment, under which the government could almost indiscriminately seize assets, brought down the investment bank Drexel Burnham Lambert.

The Southern District had long been worrisome to Trump. After his election, he had an unseemly meeting with Preet Bharara, the federal prosecutor there, a move whose optics were alarming to all of his advisers, including Don McGahn and the incoming attorney general, Jeff Sessions. (The meeting foreshadowed the one Trump would shortly have with Comey, during which he sought a pledge of loyalty in return for job security.) His meeting with Bharara was unsatisfactory: Bharara was unwilling to humor him—or, shortly, even to return his calls. In March 2017, Trump fired him.

Now, said Kushner, even without Bharara, the Southern District was looking to treat the Trump Organization as a Mob-like enterprise; its lawyers would use the RICO laws against it and go after the president as if he were a drug lord or Mob don. Kushner pointed out that corporations had no Fifth Amendment privilege, and that you couldn't pardon a corporation. As well, assets used in or derived from the commission of a crime could be seized by the government.

In other words, of the more than five hundred companies and separate entities in which Donald Trump had been an officer, up until he became president, many might be subject to forfeiture. One potential casualty of a successful forfeiture action was the president's signature piece of real estate: the government could seize Trump Tower.

* * *

In mid-March, a witness with considerable knowledge of the Trump Organization's operations traveled by train to Washington to appear before the Mueller grand jury. Picked up at Union Station by the FBI, the witness was driven to the federal district court. From 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., two prosecutors on the Mueller team, Aaron Zelinsky and Jeannie Rhee, reviewed with the witness, among other issues, the structure of the Trump Organization.

The prosecutors asked the witness about the people who regularly talked to Trump, how often they met with him, and for what purposes. They also asked how meetings with Trump were arranged and where they took place. The witness's testimony yielded, among other useful pieces of information, a signal fact: all checks issued by the Trump Organization were personally signed by Donald Trump himself.

The Trump Organization's activities in Atlantic City were a particular subject of interest that day. The witness was asked about Trump's relationship with known Mafia members—not *if* he had such relationships, but the nature of the relationships prosecutors already knew existed. The prosecutors also wanted to know about Trump Tower Moscow, a project pursued by Trump for many years—pursued, in fact, well into the 2016 campaign—albeit never brought to fruition.

Michael Cohen, Trump's personal lawyer and a Trump Organization officer, was another significant topic. The prosecutors asked questions about the level of Cohen's disappointment at not being included in the president's White House team. They seemed to be trying to gauge how much resentment Cohen felt, which led the witness to infer that they wanted to estimate how much leverage they might have if they attempted to flip Michael Cohen against the president.

Zelinsky and Rhee wanted to know about Jared Kushner. And they wanted to know about Hope Hicks.

The two prosecutors also delved into the president's personal life. How often did he cheat on his wife? With whom? How were trysts arranged? What were the president's sexual interests? The Mueller investigation, and its grand jury, was becoming a clearing house for the details of Trump's long history of professional and personal perfidiousness.

When the long day was finally over, the witness left the grand jury room shocked—not so much by what the prosecutors wanted to know but by what they already knew.

* * *

By the third week of March, Trump's son-in-law had the president's full attention. "They can not only impeach you, they can bankrupt you" was Kushner's message.

Agitated and angry, Trump pressed Dowd for more reassurances, holding him accountable for the prior reassurances Trump had frequently demanded he be given. Dowd held firm: he yet believed that the fight was in its early stages and that Mueller was still on a fishing expedition.

But Trump's patience was finally at an end. He decided that Dowd was a fool and should go back into the retirement from which, Trump kept repeating, he had rescued him. Indeed, resisting that retirement, Dowd pleaded his own case, assuring the president that he could continue to provide him with valuable help. To no avail: on March 22, Dowd reluctantly resigned, sending another bitter former Trumper into the world.

2

THE DO-OVER

The day John Dowd was fired, Steve Bannon was sitting at his dinin room table trying to forestall another threat to the Trump pres dency. This one wasn't about a relentless prosecutor but rather a betray base. It was about the Wall that wasn't.

The town houses on Capitol Hill, middle-class remnants of the nin teenth century, are cramped up-and-down affairs of modest parlor floo nook-y sitting rooms, and small bedrooms. Many serve as headquarte for causes and organizations that can't afford Washington's vast amou of standard-issue office real estate. Some double as housing for th organization's leaders. Many represent amateur efforts or eccentric p suits, often a kind of shrine to hopes and dreams and revolutions yet occur. The "Embassy" on A Street—a house built in 1890 and the form location of Bannon's Breitbart News—was where Bannon had lived a worked since his exile from the White House in August 2017. It was p frat house, part man cave, and part pseudo-military redoubt; conspir literature was scattered about. Various grave and underemployed you men, would-be militia members, loitered on the steps.

The Embassy's creepiness and dark heart were in quite stark cont to Bannon's expansive and merry countenance. He might be in exile fr the Trump White House, but it was an ebullient banishment, coffee-fue or otherwise.

In the last few weeks, he had helped install his allies—and first-draft choices during the presidential transition—in central posts in the Trump administration. Mike Pompeo had recently been named secretary of state, John Bolton would soon become the national security advisor, and Larry Kudlow had been appointed director of the National Economic Council. The president's chief political aides were Corey Lewandowski and David Bossie, both Bannon allies, if not acolytes; both operated outside the White House and were frequent visitors at the Embassy. Many of the daily stream of White House defenders on cable television—the surrogates—were Bannon people carrying Bannon's message as well as the president's. What's more, his enemies in the White House were moving out, including Hope Hicks, H. R. McMaster, the former national security advisor, and the ever shrinking circle of allies supporting the president's son-in-law and daughter.

Bannon was often on the road. He was in Europe meeting with the rising populist right-wing groups, and in the U.S. meeting with hedge funders desperate to understand the Trump variable. He was also looking for every opportunity to try to convince liberals that the populist way ought to be their way, too. Early in the year, Bannon went to Cambridge to see Larry Summers, who had been Bill Clinton's Treasury secretary, Barack Obama's director of the National Economic Council, and, for a time, president of Harvard. Summers's wife refused to allow Bannon into their home, so the meeting happened at Harvard instead. Summers was mis-shaven and wearing a shirt that was missing a button or two, while Bannon was sporting his double-shirt getup, cargo pants, and a hunting jacket. "Both of them looked like Asperger guys," said one of the people at the meeting.

"Do you fucking realize what your fucking friend is doing?" yelled Summers about Trump and his administration. "You're fucking the country!"

"You elite Democrats—you only care about the margins, people who are rich or people who are poor," returned Bannon.

"Your trade mumbo jumbo will sink the world into a *depression*," thundered Summers.

"And you've exported U.S. jobs to China!" declared a delighted Bannon, always enjoying the opportunity to joust with a member of the establishment.

Bannon was—or at least saw himself to be—a fixer, power broker and kingmaker without portfolio. He was a cockeyed sort of Clar Clifford, that political eminence and influence peddler of the 1960s an '70s. Or a wise man of the political fringe, if that was not an ultimate kin of contradiction. Or the head of an auxiliary government. Or, perhaps something truly sui generis: no one quite like Bannon had ever playe such a central role in America's national political life, or been such a thor in the side of it. As for Trump, with friends like Bannon, who neede enemies?

The two men might be essential to each other, but they reviled an ridiculed each other, too. Bannon's constant public analysis of Trump confounding nature—both its comic and harrowing components, th behavior of a crazy uncle—not to mention his indiscreet diatribes o the inanities of Trump's family, continued to further alienate him from th president. And yet, though the two men no longer spoke, they hung o each other's words—each desperate to know what one was saying abou the other.

Whatever current feeling Bannon might have for Trump—his moo ranged from exasperation to fury to disgust to incredulity—he continued to believe that nobody in American politics could match Trump' midway-style showmanship. Yes, Donald Trump had restored *showmanship* to American politics—he had taken the wonk out of politics. In sum he knew his audience. At the same time, he couldn't walk a straight line Every step forward was threatened by his next lurch. Like many grea actors, his innate self-destructiveness was always in conflict with his kee survival instincts. Some around the president merely trusted that th latter would win over the former. Others, no matter the frustration o the effort, understood how much he needed to be led by unseen hands—unseen being the key attribute.

With no one to tell him otherwise, Bannon continued, unseen, t conduct the president's business from his dining-room table on A Street

* * *

That afternoon, a bipartisan Congress with surprising ease had passed the $1.3 trillion 2018 appropriations bill. "McConnell, Ryan, Schumer, and Pelosi," said Bannon about the Republican and Democratic congressional leadership, "in their singular moment of bipartisan magnanimity, put one over on Trump."

This legislative milestone was a result of Trump's disengagement and everybody else's attentive efforts. Most presidents are eager to get down into the weeds of the budget process. Trump took little or no interest. Hence the Republican and Democratic leadership—here supported by the budget and legislative teams in the White House—were able to pass an enormous spending bill that failed to fund Trump's must-must item, the holy grail Wall, that prospective two-thousand-mile monument meant to run the entire length of the border between the United States and Mexico. Instead, the bill provided only $1.6 billion for border security. The current bill was in effect the same budget bill that had been pushed forward at the end of the previous September, when the Wall had once again not been funded. In the fall, Trump had agreed to have the Republican-controlled Congress vote to extend the September budget bill. The *next* time it came up, the Wall would be funded or, he threatened, the government would be shut down.

Even the hardest-core Trumpers in Congress seemed content not to have to die on the actual battlefield of funding the Wall, since that would mean embracing or at least enduring an always politically risky shutdown. Trump, too, in his way, seemed to understand that the Wall was more myth than reality, more slogan than actual plan. The Wall was ever for another day.

On the other hand, it was unclear what the president understood. "We've gotten the budget," he privately told his son-in-law at the end of the March budget negotiations. "We've gotten the Wall, totally."

* * *

On Wednesday, March 21, the day before the final vote, Paul Ryan, the Speaker of the House, had come to the White House to receive the president's blessings on the budget bill.

"Got $1.6 Billion to start Wall on Southern Border, rest will be forthcoming," the president shortly tweeted.

The White House had originally asked for $25 billion for the Wall, although high-end estimates of the Wall's ultimate cost came in at $70 billion. Even then, the $1.6 billion in the appropriations bill was not so much for the Wall as for better security measures.

As the final vote neared, a gentlemen's agreement appeared to have been reached, one that extended to every corner of the government—with, it even seemed, Trump's own tacit support, or at least his convenient distraction. The understanding was straightforward: whatever their stripe, members of Congress would not blow up the appropriations process for the Wall.

There were, too, Republicans like Ryan—with the backing of Republican donors such as Paul Singer and Charles Koch—who were eager to walk back, by whatever increment possible, Trump's hard-line immigration policies and rhetoric. Ryan and others had devised a simple method for accomplishing this kind of objective: you agreed with him and then ignored him. There was happy talk, which Trump bathed in, followed by practical steps, which bored him.

That Wednesday, Trump made a series of calls to praise everyone's work on the bill. The next morning, Ryan, in a televised news conference to seal the deal, said, "The president supports this bill, there's no two ways about it."

Here were the twin realities. The Wall was the most concrete manifestation of Trumpian policy, attitude, belief, and personality. At the same time, the Wall forced every Republican politician to come to terms with his or her own common sense, fiscal prudence, and political flexibility.

It was not just the expense and impracticality of the Wall, it was having to engage in a battle for it. A government shutdown would mean a high-stakes face-off between the Trump world and the non-Trump world. Should this come to pass, it would potentially be as dramatic a moment as any that had occurred since the election of 2016.

If the Democrats wanted to harden the partisan division and were eager to find yet another example—perhaps the mother of all examples—of Trump at his most extreme, a shutdown over the Wall would hand them one. If the Republicans wanted to shift the focus from a full barbarian Trump to, say, the tax bill the Congress had recently passed shutting down the government would sweep that approach right off the table.

The White House, quite behind Trump's back, was aggressively working to pass the appropriations bill and avoid a shutdown. The vice president gave Trump the same assurance he had been given previously when a budget had been passed without full funding for the Wall: Pence said the bill provided a "down payment" for the Wall, a phrase whose debt-finance implications seemed to amply satisfy the president and which he repeated with great enthusiasm. Marc Short, the White House director of legislative affairs, and Mick Mulvaney, the director of the Office of Management and Budget, in a joint appearance in the White House briefing room that Thursday, shifted the debate from the Wall to the military. "This bill will provide the largest year-over-year increase in defense spending since World War II," said Mulvaney. "It'll be the largest increase for our men and women in uniform in salary in the last ten years."

* * *

The attempt to distract the Trumpian base with these bromides utterly failed. The hard-core cadre insisted on forcing the issue, and Bannon was delighted to serve as their general.

Within minutes of the budget bill's passage on March 22, Bannon, in the Embassy, began working the phones. Calling Trump's most ardent supporters, his goal was to "light him up." The effect was nearly immediate: an unsuspecting Trump started to hear from many of those on his noisy back bench, who were suddenly furious.

Bannon understood what moved Trump. Details did not. Facts did not. But a sense that something valuable might be taken from him immediately brought him up on his hind legs. If you confronted him with losing, he would turn on a dime. Indeed, turning on a dime was his only play. "It's not that he needs to win the week, or day, or even the hour," reflected Bannon. "He needs to win the *second*. After that, he drifts."

For the hard-core Trumpers, it was back to a fundamental through line of Trumpism: you had to constantly remind Trump which side he was on. As Bannon organized a howling protest from the president's base, he took stock of the Trump reality: "There simply is not going to be a Wall, ever, if he doesn't have to pay a political price for there not being a Wall."

If the Wall was not under way by the midterm elections in November, it would show Trump to be false and, worse, weak. The Wall needed to be real. The absence of the Wall in the spending bill was just what it seemed to be: Trump out to lunch. Trump's most effective message, the forward front of the Trump narrative—maximal aggression toward illegal immigrants—had been muted. And this had happened without him knowing it.

* * *

The night of the twenty-second, the Fox News lineup—Tucker Carlson, Laura Ingraham, and Sean Hannity—hammered the message: betrayal.

The battle was on. The Republican leadership on the Hill, along with the donor class, stood sober and pragmatic in the face of both political realities and the prospect of unlimited billions in government spending—with, certainly, no illusions that Mexico was going to pay for the Wall. Opposing them were the Fox pundits, righteous and unyielding in their appeal to the true emotion of Trumpism.

The personal transformation of Trump over the course of the evening was convulsive. All three Fox pundits delivered a set of electric shocks, each rising in current. Trump had sold out the movement. Or, worse, Trump had been outsmarted and outwitted. Trump, on the phone, roared in pain and fury. He was the victim. He had no one in his corner. He could trust no one. The congressional leadership: against him. The White House itself: against him. Betrayal? Almost everyone in the White House had betrayed *him*.

The next morning it got worse. Pete Hegseth, the most obsequious of the Fox Trump lovers, seemed, on *Fox & Friends*, nearly brought to tears by Trump's treachery.

Then, almost simultaneously with Hegseth's wailing, Trump abruptly—confoundingly—shifted position and tweeted that he was considering vetoing the appropriations bill. The same bill that, twenty-four hours before, he had embraced.

That Friday morning, he came down from the residence into the Oval Office in a full-on rage so violent that, for a moment, his hair came undone. To the shock of the people with him, there stood an almost entirely bald Donald Trump.

The president's sudden change of heart sent the entire Republican Party into a panic. If Trump carried out his threat not to sign the bill, he would bring on what they most feared: a shutdown. And he might well blame the shutdown on his own party.

Mark Meadows, the head of the House Freedom Caucus and a staunch Trump ally in Congress, called the president from Europe to say that after the vote on Thursday afternoon most members had left town for the congressional recess. Congress wouldn't be able to undo the previous day's vote, and the shutdown was due to commence in mere hours.

Mitch McConnell rushed Defense Secretary Jim Mattis into action to tell the president that American soldiers would not be paid the next day if he didn't sign the bill. This was a repeat performance: Mattis had issued a similar warning during a threatened shutdown in January.

"*Never . . . never . . . never . . . again*," Trump shouted, pounding the desk after each "never."

Once again he caved and agreed to sign the bill. But he vowed that next time there would be billions upon billions for the Wall or there really would be a shutdown. Really. *Really.*

* * *

Bannon had been here before, so many times.

"Dude, he's Donald fucking Trump," said Bannon, holding his head and sitting at his table in the Embassy the day after the president signed the bill.

Bannon was not confused: he had a clear understanding of how great a liability Trump could be to Bannon's own vision and career. To the nervous titters of the people around him, Bannon believed he was the man of populist destiny and not Donald Trump.

The urgency here was real. Bannon believed he represented the workingman against the corporate-governmental-technocratic machine whose constituency was the college-educated. In Bannon's romantic view, the workingman smelled of cigarettes, crushed your hand in his, and was hard as brick—and not from working out in a gym. This remembranc of things past, of (if it ever existed) a leveled world where a workingma was proud of his work and identity, was inspiring, Bannon believed, global anger. It was a revolution—this worldwide unease and fear an day-by-day upending of liberal assumptions—and it was his. The globa hegemon was in his sights. He was the man behind the curtain—and h might as well be in front of it, too—trying to snatch the world back fro its postmodern anomie and restore something like the homogenized an neighborly embrace of 1962.

And China! And the coming Götterdämmerung! To Bannon, th was way-of-life stuff. China was the Russia of 1962—but smarter, mo tenacious, and more threatening. American hedge funders, in their secr support of China against the interests of the American middle class, we the new fifth column.

How much of this did Trump understand? How much was Trum committed to the ideas that moved Bannon and, by some emotion osmosis, the base? Trump was more than a year in, and not a shovelful dirt had yet been dug for the Wall, nor a penny allocated. The Wall a so much else that was part of Bannon's populist revolution—the deta of which he had once listed on whiteboards in his White House offi expecting to check each one off—were entirely captive to Trump's inatte tion and wild mood swings. Trump, Bannon had long ago learned, "does give a fuck about the agenda—he doesn't know what the agenda *is*."

* * *

In late March, after the gloom of the budget bill disaster had lifted, th was a brief, optimistic moment for the faithful in Trump's inner circle.

Chief of Staff John Kelly, fed up with Trump—just as Trump was up with him—seemed surely on the way out. Kelly had joined the Wh House, replacing Reince Priebus, Trump's first chief of staff, in Aug 2017, charged with bringing management discipline to a chaotic W Wing. But by mid-fall, Trump was circumventing Kelly's new pro dures. Jared and Ivanka—with many of the new rules designed to c tail their open access to the president—were going over his head.

the end of the year, Trump was casually mocking his chief of staff and his penchant for efficiency and strict procedures. Indeed, both men were openly trashing each other, quite unmindful of the large audience for their slurs. For Trump, Kelly was a "twitcher" and "feeble" and ready to "stroke out." For Kelly, Trump was "deranged" and "mad" and "stupid."

The drama just got weirder.

In February, Kelly, a retired four-star general, grabbed Trump adviser Corey Lewandowski outside the Oval Office and pushed him up against a wall. "Don't look him in the eye," whispered Trump about Kelly after the incident, circling his finger next to his head in the crazy sign. The confrontation left everybody shaken, with Trump asking Lewandowski not to tell anyone, and Lewandowski, when talking to the people he did tell, saying that he had almost wet himself.

By March, Trump and Kelly were hardly speaking. Trump ignored him; Kelly sulked. Or Trump would drop pointed hints that Kelly should resign, and Kelly would ignore him. Everyone assumed the countdown had begun.

Various Republicans, from Ryan to McConnell to their right-wing adversary Mark Meadows, along with Bannon, had gotten behind a plan to push House majority leader Kevin McCarthy for chief of staff. Even Meadows, who hated McCarthy, was all for it. Here finally was a strategy: McCarthy, a top tactician, would refocus an unfocused White House on one mission—the midterms. Every tweet, every speech, every action would be directed toward salvaging the Republican majority.

Alas, Trump didn't want a chief of staff who would focus him. Trump, it was clear, didn't want a chief of staff who would tell him *anything*. Trump did not want a White House that ran by any method other than to satisfy his desires. Someone happened to mention that John F. Kennedy didn't have a chief of staff, and now Trump regularly repeated this presidential factoid.

* * *

The Mueller team, as it pursued the Russia investigation, continued to bump up against Trump's unholy financial history, exactly the rabbit hole

Trump had warned them not to go down. Mueller, careful to protect his own flank, took pains to reassure the president's lawyers that he wasn't pursuing the president's business interests; at the same time, he was passing the evidence his investigation had gathered about Trump's business and personal affairs to other federal prosecutors.

On April 9, the FBI, on instructions from federal prosecutors in New York, raided the home and office of Michael Cohen, as well as a room he was using in the Regency Hotel on Park Avenue. Cohen, who billed himself as Trump's personal lawyer, sat handcuffed for hours in his kitchen while the FBI conducted its search, itemizing and hauling away every electronic device its agents could find.

Bannon, coincidentally, also stayed at the Regency on his frequent trips to New York, and he would sometimes bump into Cohen in the hotel's lobby. Bannon had known Cohen during the campaign, and the lawyer's mysterious involvement in campaign issues often worried him. Now, in Washington, seeing the Cohen news, Bannon knew that another crucial domino had fallen.

"While we don't know where the end is," said Bannon, "we can guess where it might begin: with Brother Cohen."

* * *

On April 11, three weeks after the president signed the budget bill, Paul Ryan—one of the government's most powerful figures given the Republican lock on Washington—announced his plan to leave the Speakership and depart Congress.

"Listen to what Paul Ryan is saying," said Bannon, sitting at his table in the Embassy early that morning. "It's over. Done. Done. And Paul Ryan wants the fuck off the Trump train today."

Ryan had been telling almost anyone who would listen that as many as fifty or sixty House seats would be lost seven months hence in the midterm elections. A Ryan lieutenant, Steve Stivers, chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee, was estimating a loss of ninety to one hundred seats. At this gloomy hour, it seemed more than possible that the Democrats would eliminate their twenty-three-seat deficit and gain a majority greater than the one the Republicans held now. Except, unlike the Republicans, theirs would be a unified party—or at least one that was unified against Donald Trump.

Ryan and Stivers were hardly the only ones seeing such a result. Mitch McConnell was telling donors not to even bother contributing to House races. The money should go to the Senate campaign, where prospects for holding the Republican majority were significantly brighter.

This was, for Donald Trump, in Bannon's view, the most desperate moment in his political career, arguably even worse than the revelation of the *Access Hollywood* grab-them-by-the-pussy tape. He was already on the ropes legally, with Mueller and the Southern District bearing down; now, looking at a likely wipeout in the midterm elections, he was in serious political jeopardy as well.

But Bannon's usual ebullience quickly returned. As he talked his way out of his funk, he became nearly joyful. If the establishment—Democrats, Republicans, moderate thinkers of every sort—believed that Donald Trump needed to be run out of town, then Bannon relished the prospect of defending him. For Bannon, this was the mission, but it was also sport. Bannon thrived on the possibility of upset. His own leap to the world stage had come because the Trump campaign was so deep in hopelessness that he was allowed to take it over. Then, on November 9, 2016, against all odds and expectations, Trump, riding Bannon's campaign—with Bannon's primacy soon one of the bitterest pills for Trump to swallow—won the presidency. Now, even with almost every indicator for the November elections looking bleak, Bannon believed he could yet see how Republican losses could be held to under the twenty-three seats needed to save the House majority. Still, it was going to be a grinding fight.

"When Trump calls his New York friends after dinner and whines that he doesn't have a friend in the world, he's kind of right," said a mordant Bannon.

Bannon viewed the case against Donald Trump as both inherently political—his enemies willing to do whatever it took to bring him down—and essentially true. He had little doubt that Trump was guilty of most of what he was accused of. "How did he get the dough for the primary and then for the general with his 'liquidity' issues?" asked Bannon with hi hands out and his eyebrows up. "Let's not dwell."

But for Bannon there were two sides in American politics—not s much right and left, but right brain and left brain. The left brain wa represented by the legal system, which was empirical, evidentiary, an methodical; given the chance, it would inevitably and correctly convic Donald Trump. The right side was represented by politics, and therefor by voters who were emotional, volatile, febrile, and always eager to thro the dice. "Get the deplorables fired up"—he slapped his hands in thunder clap effect—"and we'll save our man."

Almost a year and a half on, all of the issues of 2016 remained a powerful and raw as ever: immigration, white man's resentment, and th liberal contempt for the working—or out-of-work—white man. The yea 2018 was, for Bannon, the real 2016: the deplorable base had become th deplorable nation. "It's civil war," Bannon said, a happy judgment he ofte repeated.

The most resonant issue was Donald Trump himself: the people wh elected him would be galvanized by the effort to take him from then Bannon was horrified by mainstream Republican efforts to run the com ing election on the strength of the recent Republican tax cut. "Are yo kidding? Oh my fucking god, are you kidding?" This election was abou the fate of Donald Trump.

"Let's have a do-over election. That's what the libs want. They ca have it. Let's do it. Up or down, Trump or no Trump."

Impeachment was not to be feared, it was to be embraced. "That what you're voting for: to impeach Donald Trump or to save him fro impeachment."

The legal threat, however, might be moving faster than the electio And to Bannon—who knew more about the president's hankerings, moo swings, and impulse-control issues than almost anyone—you could n have produced a needier or more hapless defendant.

* * *

Since coming aboard in the summer of 2017, the president's legal team-Dowd, Cobb, and Sekulow—had delivered the message their client insiste upon hearing, that he was not a target and would shortly be exonerated. But the lawyers went even further with their feel-good strategy.

Presidents, faced with hostile investigations by the other coequal branches of government, Congress and the judiciary, invariably cite executive privilege both as a legitimate principle and as a dilatory tactic. It's a built-in bargaining chip. But Trump's lawyers, hoisted by how often they had to assure the president that he had nothing to fear, supported their confident assessment, to Trump's delight, by dispensing with any claim of executive privilege and willingly satisfying all the special counsel's requests. Trump, in all his dodginess, had become an open book. What's more, Trump himself, ever believing in the force and charm of his own personality, was, with his attorneys' apparent assent, eager to testify.

And yet, Bannon knew, it was still much worse. The president's lawyers had sent more than 1.1 million documents to the special counsel, aided by only a scant document production team. It was just Dowd, Cobb, and two inexperienced assistants. In major litigations, documents are meticulously logged and cross-referenced into elaborate and efficient database systems. Here, they shipped over much of the material merely as attachments, and kept minimal or no records of what exactly had been sent. Few in the White House knew what they had given up and thus what the special counsel had. And the haphazard approach didn't stop there. Dowd and Cobb neither prepared many of the witnesses who had worked for the White House in advance of their testimony to Mueller's team nor debriefed them after they testified.

Bannon was overcome by the hilarity and stupidity of this what-me-worry approach to federal prosecutors whose very reputations depended on nailing the president. Trump needed a plan—which, of course, Bannon had.

Bannon swore that he did not want to go back into the White House. He wouldn't ever, he said. The humiliations of working in Trump's administration had almost destroyed Bannon's satisfaction at having risen so miraculously to the top of the world.

Some, however, were not convinced by his protestations. They believed that Bannon actively fantasized that he would be brought back into the West Wing to save Trump—and that, not incidentally, this would be his ultimate revenge on Trump, saving him yet again. Bannon certainly believed that he was the only one who could pull off this difficult rescue, a reflection of his conviction that he was the most gifted political strategist of his time, and of his view that Trump was surrounded by only greater and lesser lummoxes.

Trump, Bannon believed, needed a wartime consigliere. And if, he mused, Jared and Ivanka were finally sent packing . . . But no, he insisted, not even then.

Moreover, Trump would not be able to tolerate it. Bannon understood that only Trump could save the day, or at least that Trump *believed* only he could save the day. No other scenario was possible. He would rather lose, would rather even go to jail, than have to share victory with someone else. He was psychologically incapable of not being the focus of all attention.

In the end, it was easier and more productive to give Trump advice at a distance than up close. It was a safer play to do what needed to be done without Trump himself actually being involved with, or even aware of, what was being done.

The morning Ryan announced his retirement from the House, Bannon was particularly eager to send some advice Trump's way. Setting up a deft bank shot, he invited Robert Costa, a reporter for the *Washington Post*, to visit him at the Embassy.

Bannon spent a good part of every day talking to reporters. On some days, perhaps most days, his blind-quote voice—hidden behind a familiar attribution such as "this account is drawn from interviews with current and former officials"—crowded out most other voices on the subject of whatever new crisis was engulfing the Trump administration. These quotes functioned as something like a stage whisper that Trump could pretend he didn't hear. Trump, in fact, was always desperately seeking Bannon's advice, though only if there was the slightest pretext for believing that it came from some place other than Bannon. Indeed, Trump was quite willing to hear Bannon say something in this or that interview and then claim he had thought of it himself.

Costa sat at Bannon's dining-room table for two hours, taking down Bannon's prescription for how to save Trump from himself.

Trump's stupidity, said Bannon, could sometimes be made into a virtue. Here was Bannon's idea: the president should make a retroactive claim of executive privilege. *I didn't know. Nobody told me. I was ill-advised.*

It was hard not to see Bannon's satisfaction in a prostrate Trump admitting to his own lack of guile and artfulness.

Bannon understood that this claim of retroactive executive privilege would have no chance of success—nor should it. But the sheer audacity of it could buy them four or five months of legal delay. Delay was their friend, possibly their only friend. They could work this claim of retroactive executive privilege, no matter how loopy, all the way to the Supreme Court.

For this plan to work, the president would have to get rid of his inept lawyers. Oh, and he would also have to fire Rod Rosenstein, the deputy attorney general who was overseeing the Mueller investigation. Bannon had been against the firing of Comey, and in the months after the appointment of the special counsel, he had fought the president's almost daily impulse to fire Mueller and Rosenstein, seeing this as the surest invitation to impeachment. ("Just don't pay attention to his crazy shit," he had urged everyone around the president.) But now they had run out of options.

"Firing Rosenstein is our only way out of here," Bannon told Costa. "I don't come to this lightly. As soon as they went to Cohen—that's what they do in Mob prosecutions to get a response from the true target. So you can sit there and get bled out—get indicted, go to grand juries—or you can fight it politically. Get it out of the law-and-order system where we are losing and are going to lose. A new DAG will review where we stand on this thing, which could take a couple of months. Delay, delay, delay—and shift it politically. Can we win? I have no fucking idea. But I know on that other path I'm going to lose. It's not perfect . . . but we live in a world of imperfect."

* * *

Costa's story, which was posted online later that day, described Bannon as "pitching a plan to West Wing aides and congressional allies to cripple the federal probe into Russian interference in the 2016 election, according to four people familiar with the discussions." But however many people

Costa had spoken to about the background machinations of Steve Bannon, what mattered was that he had spoken directly and at length to Bannon himself, who was using the *Washington Post* to pitch a plan to the president.

Bannon's three-part plan for Trump instantly made its way to the Oval Office. And the next morning, the president offered Kushner his view that he should fire Rosenstein, reinstate a claim of executive privilege, and get a tough-guy lawyer.

Kushner, pressing his own strategies, urged his father-in-law to move cautiously when it came to Rosenstein.

"Jared is spooked," said a scornful Trump later that day while on the phone to a confidant. "What a girl!"

3

LAWYERS

There was a running sweepstakes or office pool for the unhappiest person in the White House. Many had held the title, but one of the most frequent winners was White House counsel Don McGahn. He was a constant target for his boss's belittling, mocking, falsetto-voice mimicry, and, as well, sweeping disparagements of his purpose and usefulness.

"This is why we can't have nice things," McGahn uttered almost obsessively under his breath, quoting the Taylor Swift song to comment on whatever egregious act Trump had just committed (". . . because you break them," the song continues).

McGahn's background was largely as a federal election lawyer. Mostly he was on the more-money, less-transparency side—he was against, rather than for, aggressive enforcement of election laws. He served as the counsel to the Trump campaign, arguably among the most careless about election law compliance in recent history. Before joining the Trump administration, McGahn had no White House or executive branch experience. He had never worked in the Justice Department or, in fact, anywhere in government. Formerly an attorney for a nonprofit affiliated with the Koch brothers, he was known as a hyperpartisan: when Obama's White House counsel, Kathy Ruemmler, the previous occupant of McGahn's office, reached out to congratulate him and to offer to be a resource on past practices, McGahn did not respond to her email.

One of McGahn's jobs was to navigate what was possibly the most complicated relationship in modern government: he was the effective point person between the White House and the Department of Justice. Part of his portfolio, then, was to endure the president's constant rage and bewilderment about why the DOJ was personally hounding him, and his incomprehension that he could do nothing about it.

"It's my Justice Department," Trump would tell McGahn, often repeating this more than dubious declaration in his signature triad.

Nobody could quite be certain of the number of times McGahn had had to threaten, with greater or lesser intention, to quit if Trump made good on his threat to fire the attorney general, the deputy attorney general, or the special counsel. Curiously, one defense against the charge that the president had tried to fire Mueller in June 2017 in an effort to end the special counsel's investigation—as the *New York Times* claimed in a January 2018 scoop—was the fact that Trump was almost constantly trying to fire Mueller or other DOJ figures, doing so often multiple times a day.

McGahn's steadying hand had so far helped avert an ultimate crisis. But he had missed or let slip by or simply ignored a number of intemperate, unwise, and interfering actions by the president that might, McGahn feared, comprise the basis of obstruction charges. Deeply involved with the conservative Federalist Society and its campaign for "textualist" judges, McGahn had long dreamed himself of becoming a federal judge himself, but given the no-man's-land he occupied between Trump and the Justice Department—not to mention Trump's sometimes daily attacks on the DOJ's independence, which McGahn had to accept or condone—he knew his future as a jurist was dead.

* * *

Fifteen months into Trump's tenure, the tensions between the administration and the Department of Justice had erupted into open conflict. Now i was war—the White House against its own DOJ.

Here was a modern, post-Watergate paradox: the independence o the Justice Department. The DOJ might be, from every organizationa and statutory view, an instrument of the White House, and, as much a any other agency, its mission might appear to be driven by whoever hel the presidency. That's what it looked like on paper. But the opposite was true, too. There was a permanent-government class in the Justice Department that believed an election ought to have no role at all in how the DOJ conducted itself. The department was outside politics and ought to be as blind as the courts. In this view, the Justice Department, as the nation's preeminent investigator and prosecutor, was as much a check on the White House, and ought to be as independent of the White House, as the other branches of government. (And within the Justice Department, the FBI claimed its own level of independence from its DOJ masters, as well as from the White House itself.)

Even among those at Justice and the FBI who had a more nuanced view, and who recognized the symbiotic nature of the department's relationship with the White House, there was yet a strong sense of the lines that cannot be crossed. The Justice Department and the FBI had, since Watergate, found themselves accountable to Congress and the courts. Any top-down effort to influence an investigation, or any evidence of having bowed to influence—memorialized in a memo or email—might derail a career.

In February 2018, Rachel Brand, the associate attorney general, a former Bush lawyer who had been nominated for the number three DOJ job by Obama, resigned to take a job as a Walmart lawyer. If Trump had fired Rosenstein during Brand's tenure, she would have become acting attorney general overseeing the Mueller investigation. She told colleagues she wanted to get out before Trump fired Rosenstein and then demanded that she fire Mueller. She would take Bentonville, Arkansas, where Walmart had its headquarters, over Washington, D.C.

For a generation or more, the arm's-length relationship between the White House and the Department of Justice often seemed more like a never-ending conflict between armed camps. Bill Clinton could hardly stomach his attorney general, Janet Reno, having to weather the blowback from her decisions regarding Ruby Ridge, a standoff and deadly overreaction between survivalists and the FBI; Waco, another botched standoff with a Christian cult; and the investigation of Dr. Wen Ho Lee, with the DOJ chastised for its reckless pursuit of a suspected spy. Clinton came very close to firing Louis Freeh, his FBI director, who openly criticized him, but managed to swallow his rage. Top people from the Bush White House, the FBI, and the Justice Department almost came to literal blows at the bedside of the ailing AG John Ashcroft—James Comey himself standing in the way of the White House representatives trying to get Ashcroft to renew a domestic surveillance program—with the White House finally having to back down. Under Obama, Comey, who by then was the FBI director, made a further grab for the FBI's independence from the Justice Department when he unilaterally decided to end and later reopen the Hillary Clinton email investigation—and, by doing so, arguably tossing the election to her opponent.

Enter Donald Trump, who had neither political nor bureaucratic experience. His entire working life was spent at the head of what was in essence a small family operation, one designed to do what he wanted and to bow to his style of doing business. At the time of his election, he was absent even any theoretical knowledge of modern government and its operating rules and customs.

Trump was constantly being lectured about the importance of "custom and tradition" at the Justice Department. As reliably, he would respond, "I don't want to hear this bullshit!"

He needed, one aide observed, "a hard, black line. Without a hard, black line that he can't cross, he's crossing it."

Trump believed what to him seemed obvious: the DOJ and FBI worked for him. They were under his direction and control. They must do exactly what he demanded of them; they must jump through his hoops. "He reports to me!" an irate and uncomprehending Trump repeated early in his tenure about both his attorney general Jeff Sessions and his FBI director James Comey. "I am the boss!"

"I could have made my brother the attorney general," Trump insisted, although in fact he did not even speak to his brother (Robert, a seventy-one-year-old retired businessman). "Like Kennedy." (Six years after John F. Kennedy appointed his brother Robert attorney general, Congress passed the Federal Anti-Nepotism Statute, called the "Bobby Kennedy law," to prevent exactly this sort of thing in the future—although that did not stop Trump from hiring his daughter and son-in-law as senior advisers.)

The Billionaire's Playboy Club

By Virginia Roberts

To my true love Robbie who believes in me every step of the way and to all of my children, you are all my very inspirations!

Chapter1

Every single person in this shared world together has a unique story of his or her own to tell, this one is mine.

It was coming up to my third night camping out at Miami Beach in the summer of 1997. I was thirteen years old and hiding from a world full of hurt. Sitting on the shoreline for hours watching the sunset fall deeper into the horizon, my eyes were glazed over with tears, not from being wind-whipped by the rough sea breeze, but from reflecting on the abuse I encountered as a young girl and how everyone in my life who was supposed to be there for me had now turned their backs on me in abandonment. My fears crept up and the excitement of escaping all of them faded now realizing how alone I really was now, and for the hunger that was paining my belly. At this point, with nowhere to go and only time to waste, I wiped the tears from my eyes and set out to find an empathetic person that I could manage to get dinner money from. If not, it wouldn't have been the first time I had gone hungry for the night. I walked to the nearest bus stop and asked a handful of people for any spare change, none of whom that could help me. Sitting down on a nearby curb disappointed in grief of my current state, I put my head into my knees and began to sob.

Out of nowhere, it seemed, a black stretch limousine turned the corner and stopped in front of the curb where I had been hopelessly lost. The back door opened to reveal a heavy weight and balding, old man with a big cheesy smile. Neatly dressed in black trousers and a collared shirt, he was sitting next to a striking young, blonde girl, drop dead beautiful and dressed in a foxy red mini dress she looked like a model just stepping off a runway.

Their smiles greeted me warmly and he kindly asked, "What is such a sweet little girl like you doing sitting alone on the street looking so upset?" Shocked from this strangers concern I was hesitant in telling him the truth. Reluctantly I decided to tell him that I was a runaway, not from around here and really hungry. Hoping at most, I would get some money for food from him. He instantly displayed a chilling excitement and offered me to come into his car so we could talk some more. That should've been my first queue to get out of there quick but with no where to go, and so naïve I didn't realize how much worse it could get. Setting foot into that limo, I made my first entrance into a world that would entrap me for many years to come.

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He introduced himself immediately as Ron Eppinger, a businessman and owner of a successful modeling agency, called "Perfect 10". Flaunting his oozing wealth by introducing one of his many girlfriends, the beauty next to him was Yana, a supposed model from the Czech Republic who looked like she could be in her early twenties with the heavy load of makeup she was wearing, but really was only in her late teens. She kissed me on both cheeks and politely said "Hello" in a thick Czech accent, making me feel a little more at ease. Convinced it couldn't be that bad there was another girl in the car, right? I couldn't be more wrong.

What he didn't tell me to begin with was that his modeling agency was only posing for an undercover trade. By the time I found out I thought it was too late to run. His business was really an illegal immigrant trafficking ring of young women mostly consisting of underage girls that he was using as escorts to make him uber rich. Only available to a selective clientele costing them anywhere from $1000.00 and over per hour of erotic entertainment, the girls were trained to fulfill every sexual desire asked of them, no matter how bizarre the requests might be. The high paid escorts, for Ron's super rich clientele, such as Yana and many other charismatic beauties would only benefit a fraction of their earnings for themselves, Ron reaping in the majority of the financial rewards and being they were all illegal immigrants they were further trapped by his enslavement.

I proceeded to introduce myself, besides what he had found out about me on the curbside. Telling him my name and a little about how I ended up on the streets explaining that I could take care of myself and didn't need my family or anyone to look after me anymore. Looking back later in life I can now admit I was in a terrible state, but being such a headstrong teenager, I refused to give in. He asked my age and I told him I was sixteen at first. He coyly replied, "Are you sure? I think you could be telling me a fib? How old are you… really? I wont be mad" Being a terrible liar, I knew had been caught out and couldn't deny it any further. I told him the truth and he chuckled then paused and answered in a very serious tone " As long as you never lie to me again I will take you in" Right away I pondered to myself what did he mean…take me in?

He gave the driver the location of our destination and rolled the middle window back up to then tell me a story of how his daughter had passed away seven years ago from a horrific car accident in which four other teens were killed and he has never gotten over it. I reacted with sheer

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EXHIBIT 8
Giuffre
AGREN BLANDO REPORTING
5/3/16 KAM

sympathy and gave him my pity, believing this man had a heart. His next proposal was eerie, he said," If you wanted, I can be your new Daddy. Someone to take care of you and you'll be my new baby forever" he stroked my hair such as a caring parent would comfort a scared child. A part of me wanted to accept his words and believe he really could feel that way, and then I also considered how hard it was living on the streets. In the end I convinced myself this would be the lesser of two evils.

The car stopped at a plaza on the water, surrounded by little boutique shops, restaurants, and little stalls with items for sale like sunglasses and costume jewelry. I didn't know what to say or do or how to act, it all happened so fast I just went along with everything he said, for now.

We went to a take out restaurant and ate on the waterside, and afterwards he took me to G.A.P Kids co. to dress me in his idea of proper attire, tiny cutoff shorts revealing the cusp of my buttocks and some shirts that barely fit, even the sales assistant was shocked at what she thought was my Grandfathers choice in clothing. I couldn't even believe it myself only an hour ago I was begging for money living on the streets and now I was dining alfresco and shopping at name brand outlets. We then hit a couple of more specialty stores afterwards. He said he had to buy me a few more necessities to start with. Lacy G-strings and what looked to me like lingerie pieces I had only seen grown women wearing in magazine ad's or movies was now a part of my wardrobe, in my mind it was a big step up from being a little girl any longer.

The driver took us back to Ron's grand apartment overlooking the isle of Key Biscayne and a large bridge leading into a Miami Harbor. Entering his residence, I was blown away by the spectacular view, rich décor, and white marble floors that were so glossy it looked as if I was stepping on glass. He took my shopping bags to a large room at the back of the apartment and put them into a small closet. The room was considerably large with glass exterior walls that maximized the potential of the panorama landscape soaking in the seascape of Miami. In the room was a gigantic round bed raised off the floor by three steps and mirrors on the ceiling. It looked like a honeymoon suite out of a raunchy hotel. He then exclaimed, "This is my room here and you will be sharing it with me" When I asked him where I would sleep he then sickly replied "With me silly, where else of course?" With no room for argument I pretended to be O.K with everything that my common sense was screaming out in my head to run.

Next I was taken down a long hall at the other end of the apartment to meet five more exotic beauties. Three girls were in their late teens and the other two in were in their early twenties. All of them were from the Czech, here under false passports provided by Ron and his contacts. Yana held my hand while introducing me to the group of girls as "Baby" a pet

name she came up with for me, being I was the youngest one among them or ever to be brought in by Ron for that matter. It became my new identity not even worrying to mention my real name to anyone anymore. My identity was no longer important to myself, I wanted to become someone new and "Baby" is who I was.

A shocking first impression, the girls were completely nude revealing their voluptuous young bodies with such a careless ease and others were in just a G-string, similar to the one's Ron had bought me earlier. They were all stunning girls and full of life. Charismatic and beautiful, they were the girls who should be on the front of billboards not selling their bodies to old crewed men for sex. Doing each other's make-up in front of the mirror and chatting away on the bed with no care in the world, aiming at persuading me to see the highlights of the life Ron gave them and they almost did. Ron left the room for a few moments, letting us all get to know each other a little better and that's when I started to compile an understanding of what really went on here.

Just catching a bit of their conversation from before my introduction, I heard them chatting about the night they were preparing for. Speaking excitedly about some men they would be entertaining in a few hours, one girl was talking about going out to sea with one o these clients on a yacht for a few days. Since none of the girls seemed shy to talk about their professions or anything for that matter, I decided to ask them a few questions about what they did. They were more than happy to expand on their point of view in the conversation, attempting to paint a pretty picture of what they were paid to do.

They all began to jump up and down with excitement like giddy school girls at a slumber party. Another girl with jet-black hair and a thick accent, wearing absolutely nothing at all, grabbed me onto the bed with them and into their fiasco, instantly making me feel accepted into their sorority, like I actually belonged somewhere for once. Yana went on to explain a little more in detail, " We accompany the wealthy friends of Ron. They want only beautiful girls by their side so we come and act however they want us too but most importantly we make them think we want them back too." Other girls began to jump in with their vivid points of view while playing with my hair, they were taking turns brushing and styling it as they were filling my head with all of the prospects I could have as an escort too. They made me feel beautiful like them, too beautiful for what a girl beyond my years should feel. I was simply being lured into a dangerous trap, just like they had been at a young age too.

It pretty much all came down to two things in their game, the money they would make and the lifestyle they were given. Their enthusiasm only interested me further, making it not only sound like an acceptable way of living but also appearing to keep them all vivaciously satisfied. This way of life was just mind blowing to even comprehend at first. With such a new outlook of the world to try and grasp at my young age I was listening to every word spoken to me with such attentiveness, I was going to try and model what I was observing from the girls. I justified their way of thinking in my head for now, thinking if all these girls seem happy enough, why couldn't I try to be, it was this or the streets for me.

Ron came back for me not long after our conversation got out of hand and took me to a bathroom down the hall. He opened the tap and filled a small plastic cup with water and handed me two small blue oval pills. Telling me to take them both as they would help me to relax a little bit more. I swallowed the pills just following his orders. I put the cup on the counter top and turned back around to face him. Backing me up against the wall and now cornered by this large man I felt his slithering hands began to creep under my shirt, writhing my skin. I closed my eyes tightly and turned my head away from him, hoping he would take my actions as a sign of being extremely uncomfortable but that wouldn't bother him at all. He was half enjoying my reaction from the smug look on his face, and persisted through it.

Continuing to undress my clothes he said he wanted to look me over and clean me up. It was so humiliating having to expose myself to this ageing man and now I knew he was going to end up with his hands and whatever else all over me. All too soon I hated to be right, as I stood naked before his widened eyes, he told me "you're a hairy bugger I'll have to shave you right up young lady", and I didn't know he wasn't just talking about my legs. Standing with my legs wide apart while this man coaxed me through the entire ordeal of shaving, his hands made me feel so dirty. "Have I lost my mind?" I thought to myself but I had to play nice until I had an opportunity to get away, this was not as fun as the girls made it out to be after all, this was utterly disgusting. I had no idea what was going to happen next with this guy, and due to whatever pharmaceuticals he gave me, I still don't know to this day.

Waking up the next morning my head was pounding in an agonizing thumping pain and I was so thirsty. The satin sheets thankfully covered my body, which was still nude from the night before, and I could hear hushed voices standing over the bed where I was pretending to still be asleep. Listening in on their conversation I kept my eyes shut. I knew Ron's voice from two of the men but not recognizing the other guys I just stayed quiet hoping they'd soon leave. Ron was telling the other man what atrocities he got up to the night before with me and I heard him say, "Doesn't she even look like an angel the way she sleeps? She's my own little angel!" He exclaimed proudly. I opened my eyes and rolled over to face them both having to wrap the sheets over my body, really not knowing what to say except "Good-morning" in a blushful tone. Ron introduced me to his business partner and told to go get dressed. He had my whole day planned out for me already. Booked into get my hair colored, a much lighter tint of blonde, and afterwards a day of shopping with the girls I was becoming exactly what he wanted me too, a carbon copy of the teenage Barbie… only I wasn't plastic and came with many benefits.

Days turned into weeks, being a servant to the sexual desires of this distorted pervert. I dreamt of escaping but where would I go and how would I get away from Ron with him controlling my every second of my day. Separating myself from the other girls being so uncomfortable with enduring the everyday occurrences I was longing for the solitude of the beach again. They were training me up to be an escort prodigy or something like it. Outrageous orgies were conducted as my lessons with the girls teaching me all of their tricks in the game, it was all for the sake of men's perverted fantasies, they didn't get anything from being sexually exploited and molesting each other, except getting paid for it. Everything from oral sex too penetration with toys, I was expected to not only to join in but even perform ludicrous acts of hedonism.

I was Thirteen years old and had never heard the terminology of these sexual acts before, and definitely shouldn't have been learning them first hand. Thrown into a world of chaos, I didn't know what to do except be as compliant as possible, even when asked to do the most degrading tasks. The excitement of the lifestyle he offered quickly diminished once I had to pay so dearly for it. The girls that subdued to this lifestyle and enjoyed it definitely put on a good act, but no little girl with hopes and dreams of their untainted future, turns to her mother and say's "one day I dream of being a prostitute, passed around from man to man, only to grow older regretting so much of my life" It was all a part of an illusion that Ron painted for us that made it seem so alluring in the first place.

Spending my days with Ron, he took advantage at every chance given. Even in his convertible with the top down I would be forced to go topless while he drove around, when I asked him why one day, it was supposedly so I could maintain an even suntan, but I knew it was his way of showing off his treasures. It was a far cry from the simple country life I had been raised in. Wearing designer miniskirts and tops that always revealed too much, of course due to Ron and the girls determining everything I wore, ate, or spoke. We would spend our days at hair laser clinics, shopping, tanning beds, and eating as little as possible. Through the nights we were expected to become party animals and greet Ron's clientele with the upmost flirtatious attention and doting as possible. Then whether we were out for dinner, at a party, or at a club, the men would choose his girl and take her home. Every girl had a different price and so did the charges depending on the various clienteles but Ron always kept me for himself.

I would always dread the end of every night, fearing what new desires he had in-store for the evening. Sometimes he would hurt me and tell me to try and enjoy it then do it over and over again until I gave him exactly what he wanted, I always resisted until I could no more, he was too overpowering and relentless at getting the results he wanted. At other times he could be so gentle and caress my skin, worshiping every inch of my body, all relying upon on what mood he was in. Often though he liked to play the teacher role and instruct me on every motion and explain what would happen when I did those certain things to him. No matter what he did to me I was only disgusted with myself more and more. I still shudder at the thought of how he used my body.

I turned fourteen in August that same year and was spending my birthday loaded on a concoction of pharmaceuticals and alcohol, being generously supplied by the very man who swore his devotion to caring for my every need. I didn't even know myself any longer, completely shying away from the girl I had grown up to be until to this point. The apartment was empty except for me, for the time being, and that was God's own little present for me…some solitude for once I thought. Pouring myself another drink I opened the sliding glass doors to the balcony and walked to the edge. Looking down from the many stories where Ron's apartment was, I wished myself a happy birthday out loud and wondered if my family even remembered the day's occurrence.

Dwelling in my sadness for the fourteen years of suffering and loneliness I had already endured, the tears swelled up in my eyes, trickling downwards making my eyeliner inevitably leak down my cheeks. Inside I felt so trapped and began to entertain the thought of jumping over the edge, it all seemed much easier, and the simple blackness that death had to offer rather than the tangled mess I was so tired of fighting to get out of seemed a much easier approach. Detached from wanting to feel anything, I became so numb towards my life's own tragedies. I couldn't live like this any longer. I lifted my bare legs over the edge of the railing and sat looking at the ground beneath me so close to even just slipping off the edge to my very death. I couldn't think of any reason not to fall. I thought I had made too many bad decisions to keep going on but some force of a higher nature had other things in store for me.

The sliding door slammed open with a burst of speed and Ron scooped me up in his big arms and brought me inside to our bedroom. Laying me down and seeing the look of despair in my eyes from my tear stained face he went into the bathroom cupboard and returned with three pink pills. Forcing me to swallow them using the angered tone of his voice he thought he was turning my sorrows into a distant dream as I passed out in

his tight clutches, crying myself all the way to sleep. He didn't even ask me what was wrong, probably because he knew already.

Soon enough the crumbling of his evil empire in the underworld of selling sex for his own advantage began with a single crack in his perfect scheme, and proudly it all started with me. Ron got a scare one-day and rampaged through his apartment telling us girls to only pack our important belongings and some clothes as we all had to leave right away. I didn't have much belonging to me so I basically sat there watching everyone rush around frantically and was curious what could've gotten a man like Ron so scarred. Once we were packed up and in the limo he was trying to calm the frantic girls down after all the panic that spread through the apartment like wildfire, I was the only one sitting there half amused at the entire situation.

He began by assuring us that everything was going to be fine. Calmly he continued to tell all of us packed in tightly, even for a limo, that we were all taking a long trip to Florida's countryside because someone has reported an anonymous tip to the missing persons unit at the local police station identifying a very young girl as a possible victim of abuse living at his apartment. Ron knew what a landmine of trouble he had brought upon himself making an exhibition out of me on the streets of Miami, I didn't pull off the older look like the other girls, I actually looked younger than my age with my blue eyes and freckles always giving the impression of my youthful innocence.

Now he just had to do whatever it took to ensure he stayed as far away from the authorities as possible. Arriving at a ranch in central Florida many hours later and I assumed it belonged to Ron knowing never to ask him things like that. I knew my purpose and it wasn't prying into his personal life outside of the bedroom. There was a main house, a few cottages, some staff quarters and paddocks where the horses were kept. I was in heaven…I thought at first. Finally, something I could really enjoy. Riding was my passion, basically growing up on the backs of horses since I was just able to walk.

Not surprisingly I began to despise Ron and all of the girls for the gross exploits they made me do with them. Beginning to isolate myself from everyone I'd rather spend my time sitting under a tree watching the horses graze, writing in my journal or painting but mostly avoiding everyone possible unless Ron required me elsewhere. Nighttime was always a reoccurring nightmare for me. Relived over and over again in many various ways. Ron would always start by making me some drinks and offering an assortment of pills before indulging himself by grotesquely putting his genitals in my mouth and tell me how to give him what he would call a "first-class blow-job", and I was being judged every minute of it. Ordering me to slowdown or speedup or maintain a perfect rhythm I was constantly being criticized for my efforts in pleasing him. I was eager when he actually gave me a compliment. The rest of the evening was always a surprise left up to a moments notice. Quite regularly he would proceed with having the girls dress me up in some sexy outfit and loads of makeup then entertain him with a lesbian reenactment revolving him in the center. Sometimes they would use dildos and other foreign sex toys, Ron liked to see us hurt during sex, sometimes even penetrating me anally but I always resisted and would try to redirect him with another sexual desire of his but I had no excuses when it came to me having to use the sex toys on him, he told me how men have g-spots in their rectum and instructed me on how to precisely penetrate him. These nights went on what seemed like an eternal sentence for the price of not living on the streets, where unfortunately for the one's still there, I feared and knew from my own personal experience, could be much worse.

Needing some contact with someone of my adolescent mentality I called one of my school friends from the past, whom I wont name out of privacy, but I'll call him T.J. We were so close and I knew very well, so well, I had memorized his number a long time before. He was my first puppy love sprung from of a childhood friendship. Being my very first crush the summer before all of this happened he was the only person I could think of that would care enough to talk to me.

In the middle of the day, the least busy time to be noticed, I snuck into one of the vacant guest rooms and used the phone to call my good friend. The sound of my voice radiated a chill in him. "It's you, oh my God Jenna! Are you okay?" he was so shocked to hear from me and the sheer fact I was still alive. Nearly three months now without a single word to my family or friends, every one doubted my return. My attempt to forge a happy voice when I spoke to him failed and I absolutely crumbled when he was at a loss for kind words for me. I told him of my current state of affairs. Telling him of Ron and how I was terrified of him, trying to escape in the middle of nowhere was useless. It was like being kept in cage that I was unable to break free from. Going on to dump my issues on T.J, I proceeded with how I longed to call my family and to be with my them for good but was too afraid they didn't want me, knowing I'd just be sent away somewhere else again and to me after all this time was like going from one cage to another.

He had been called by them numerously and promised me that they were very worried and even hired private investigators to try and find me. Given I was eleven years old the first time I was sent away, my trust in there sincerity he spoke about was seriously doubted. I kept the conversation short just in case my absence was being noticed and I left on the note that I would speak to him again shortly. His attempts to get off the phone were nothing short of desperate plea to keep me on as long as possible. I thought he was just trying to help in someway. Giving him assurance in the fact I had survived this long obviously I can hold off a while longer I gave him my love and told him I'd be in touch.

Thinking I had slipped away unnoticed I entered into the room that I shared with Ron, hoping I got away with my brief and very needed phone call. The place looked empty and everyone else seemed to be out and about so I decided to have a bath in the spa and try to relax before the night's precautions. My body glided into the steamy water as I began to think about T.J and how good it felt just to hear from a friendly voice. My thoughts drifted into the days I missed when I felt I could be silly and childlike and I nearly forgot for a moment how grown up I was acting these days.

My first glimpse at the image surrounding me when I resurfaced above the water was daunting. There was Ron was standing over my tub, looking down at me with an eager display of his arousal. He began to undo his pants and take them down when he told me "put your lips on my cock", I was too slow in responding to his request so he grabbed me by the back of the head and forced me into his groin. I had tears streaming down my face as I looked up to him with the saddest blue eyes hoping he would take pity and stop, but he never did. I was really hurt by his aggression and he definitely knew it this time, which I believe only made him more heated. I closed my eyes and began to count using the time to keep my thoughts elsewhere believing every number I counted only furthered me to the end of this. I just got over a hundred when he finally exploded in fulfillment still half submerged in the deep bath I was struggling to gain my bearings in as Ron was picked me up out of the bath and carried me to go to the bedroom, which was just outside the French adjoin doors. Still damp from the hot water in the spa I had goose bumps from the chill of the fresh air where he brought me to the bed and proceeded to deeply violate my every being. Eventually his scars that he left were too deep ever to be healed and would even carry on through the years to come.

Upon his bursting with pleasure for the second time, he just got up and left, without even saying a word to me. Left alone I was awake for hours after that. There was no escaping the pain that night. I lay naked wrapped in the sheets, sobbing in the dark. My feelings of being hurt and disgusted after his abusive ordeal "When will it ever stop" I prayed to God and begged for death rather than face another day in my life. I woke up still alone the next day and exasperated from the misery I felt the night before. Ushering through my drawers to find something to throw on I could care less what lay in store for me today, couldn't be as bad as being raped by a scary man repeatedly.

Starting my day with a few of the supplied oxytocin's and a bloody mary, made by the live-in house chef. Having two celery sticks for my breakfast, I wanted to lye out by the pool and forget the world. Ron hated tan-lines so to be caught with a bikini top on was a big no-no in his rule book but after my cries to stop were so blatantly ignored last night, I was out to piss him off so I didn't remove my shirt. I put on my headphones and before I knew it had fallen into a deep slumber from my self-made therapeutic cocktail, the only way I knew how to cope with the emotional turmoil on the inside.

Desperate to hear his voice I called my friend T.J a few more times that week. I needed to feel like someone out there really knew me. Sometimes we could just chat like old friends with no care in the world and laugh at a distant memory from too long ago. Then would come the good-bye part of the conversation and we would both get teary-eyed not knowing what could happen next or if this would even be the last time we ever spoke to each other again.

My biggest fear came to reality when I was in our bedroom one afternoon, just lounging around out of boredom. Ron came bursting in through the door, red as a tomato. I couldn't help but feeling I was in big trouble. His face was distorted and raging towards me. I knew right away he must have found out that I was calling T.J, but how, I had no idea. I had always tried to be as invisible as possible, soon enough it was all explained.

"Are you trying to get me caught? You are nothing but a stupid girl you know that! What am I supposed to do with you now?" He was tearing up the room while his rants gave me something else to think about. What would he do with me if he had no use for me any longer? I wasn't even thinking about him being caught for soliciting illegal immigrants for the purpose of prostitution. I was more worried that he would be upset at the fact I was talking to another guy, maybe even jealous that he was at least my age. I replied with simple sentences that I could manage to get out between all the shouting. I kept saying, "I'm sorry" and putting my head down in shame. He picked me up by my throat pinning me against the wall, "You are going away, far -far away from me and you better be nicer to the next man I send you to, I've heard he's not a nice as most would like. Are you fucking hearing me Bitch?" I slid down the wall, choking on the first air entering my lungs, breathless and terrified, I never thought Ron was a nice guy but I had never seen him lose it this bad. Now I was being sent me away to another stranger, another man, it only terrified me more.

The girls came in to say their good-byes all of them were crying and asking me in their best English languages, why I had to call someone and lose everything? I was able to find out through the broken sobs off of

them that the confession came from the house-keeper who said she saw me use the room regularly but was never messed up, so Ron looked at the recent telephone bills and found the same number dialed from that room consecutively, he knew it was me right away. At least he didn't know it was another guy, I thought to myself, or I probably wouldn't have made it out of there alive.

Ron came back to usher the girls out of my room and told me I had five minutes to pack my clothes, which he made clear were to be my only belongings to take with me. He washed his hands clean of me that night, or so he thought. The driver came knocking at my door, just as Ron said, no longer than the five minutes that he had offered me and he took my single bag to the car. I didn't want all the jewelry, music or books that he so caringly bought me as tokens of his twisted affection. Only taking my clothes and a wad of hundred dollar bills I had been saving, I slit a hole in my scrunchie inserting my cash for a rainy day that I was more than sure was just around the corner. .

We drove for hours, until I started seeing familiar surroundings. I couldn't believe my own eyes. I was back in Miami, but not on the beaches, somewhere in the CBD this time. The Driver delivered me to the front door with my one bag and waited at the door with me. Now I knew how it felt to be a puppy picked from her litter as you can only hope your next owner would treat you with some sort of kindness.

Another balding man answered the door but he wasn't so grotesquely fat like Ron, but still a new owner at that. He looked me up and down and seemed amused as he snickered to himself. With one last look to the driver over my shoulder it was almost an appeal to him for some way to help me. I knew he couldn't anyways, I was just hoping. He told me his name was Charlie but didn't even bother in asking me for mine. I was sure Ron already filled in all of my details when he arranged this.

Charlie picked up my bag and led me into his bachelor pad townhouse. I was never given a welcoming tour of my new residence or made to feel comfortable. He walked me up the stairs and opened one of the doors in the small hallway. Telling me this would be my room, he showed me into it and told me to wait, he would be back shortly. I sat on my bed afraid to touch anything and after the warning Ron gave me I knew I had to watch my step around here. I put my head down onto the pillows my where world was falling apart and let my emotions downpour. Exhausted from the days emotional turmoil I ended up falling asleep. I don't even know if he ever came in at all that night.

The next morning I looked out of the window to see my new surroundings. It was a beautiful sunny day outside, unlike the dreary cell I was locked away inside of. Feeling the sun warm up my face through the glass, it radiated a familiar sense of comfort from the days of the good parts of my childhood. I reminisced how it had used to be before all my life turned upside down. Before all of the fights with my family, before I had to look after myself, and before I was a slave to men.

Those days were too long gone now. With too many hard times passing me by it seemed surreal to think that life had ever even existed in the first place. With that thought I shook myself out of reminiscing that way. Whatever was going to happen was out of my control now, I just had to give myself some hope that I would have the strength to get myself out these circumstances before anything really bad happened.

Chapter 2

The house was quiet so I just assumed Charlie was still asleep. I decided to get cleaned up and have a shower. Not even a knock on the door when Charlie walked in with ease. "Typical" I thought. It was an easy way for Charlie to break the ice. "You really are as beautiful as Ron said" as he opened the curtain. Watching me rinse myself in the shower and me knowing I had no way out of this except to go along with whatever he wanted. I just looked down at the mention of Ron's name, wondering what else he had told Charlie about me. Realizing later that he wouldn't have said anything anyways, in fear I would've been a damaged product that wouldn't make him the money that young girls go for.

He just sat on the side of the vanity top and continued to take observations of me standing submerged under the falling water. I avoided looking at him and let him do all the talking, after all I knew what I had to say was of no importance, that is if he was anything like Ron. Between the water beating down over my head I could slightly hear him ramble on about some club and restaurant he owned in FT. Lauderdale. He said he was going to take me shopping for some club outfits and we would party together tonight, as if I was supposed to be excited over this so-called treat of his.

I looked up and gave him a quick smile adding a compliant nod and turned my attention to turning off the faucets and quickly grabbing my towel. I was falling so far from who I used to be, shying away from my outgoing personality to a quiet girl that didn't even recognize herself in the mirror anymore. I dried myself off and looked at the man standing between the doorway and me. He was still watching me with a sleazy look on his face but now preceded to move in my direction, arms wide open. He embraced me, running his hands up around my youthful curves, licking my neck and earlobes. Then his large, rough hands cupped my small breasts and continued downwards to feel in between my legs. I knew what I had to do to get this over and done with as quick as possible, but I was dreading this moment from the second he greeted me at the door last night.

I fell to my knees and gave into his demented perversions. Thankfully it didn't last long before he climaxed and I was allowed to get myself dressed and ready to go out. I was nothing but money well spent in his mind. This was another extremely wealthy man with a completely new set of wants and needs asking a fourteen year old girl to affectionately dote on sexual desires to a man in his mid forties. I really hated myself, these men, and just about everything my life had boiled up to by this point, but I knew from a young age that to survive in this harsh world I would have to do many things I would not willingly choose to.

At the shops he decided he would choose the clothes he paid for, which I might as well have been declared a teenage prostitute. Just like Ron he also liked it that way. The more degrading he was to me only proved his ownership of my body. He bought me tiny cocktail dresses, and skimpy outfits, which I thought closely, resembled the lingerie he'd also bought for me to wear for him. I noticed that day that he enjoyed parading me around the shopping mall and out for lunch at hooters, even joking with the waitress that he'd like to buy her uniform because he thought it'd look sexy on his new girlfriend.

We arrived at his two in one, Restaurant and Club, at around nine o'clock in the evening. It was a revolving tower called "Hot Chocolates" in downtown Ft. Lauderdale. The food was delicious and for the first time since being with Ron, I ordered a hefty meal with steak and mashed potatoes with a scrumptious gravy smothered on top. Charlie ordered strong cocktails for us both and before I knew it my head was spinning and we were on the dance floor together. The music blared in my head and the rhythm of my body took over, completely forgetting about even dancing with Charlie and letting the music take ahold and work it's magic.

It didn't do me any justice though as Charlie watched me imagining what pleasures lay in store for him later on. Taking me home before the club had even closed, he just couldn't wait to indulge on exactly what he was fantasizing from beforehand. Once back at his townhouse he led me up the stairs into his bedroom and pushed me down in the middle of his bed. The motions from the wavy mattress made me dizzy and feel even drunker when he lay on top of me. Coming at me like a hungered beast wanting to ravage his next meal, it was intimidating as he entered into me with a forceful thrust, he moaned out in delectable heaves. I looked away while he self indulged his own gratifying needs using my body as his instrument in pleasure. I only grew stronger in my head letting the hatred for men desires intensify.

The next two weeks I was expected to be at Charlie's beckon call, never aloud to leave his side, even making me sleep in his bed from the second night onwards. I never even got the chance to call T.J again. It was too much of a risk anyways. Thus pushing him further out of my memory, too afraid, of the emotional repercussions.

Our typical routine was to wake up get showered and dressed and I would put on my make-up while Charlie made his business calls for the day. We would leave the house mid-afternoon and run his errands do some shopping, sometimes meeting his friends or business partners for lunch, none of the men he introduced me to seemed offended at his choice of adolescent eye candy. They'd just continue to chat away as if it was normal to be in public with his arms draped over a girl young enough to be his granddaughter, not too shy by giving me a flirty tap on my bottom or even try to kiss me.

My last night was no different from every other night. We went shopping that day and out for lunch alone. Later we headed to a club his friend just launched and it was his grand opening that night. The club was called "Iguana Joe's". We met up with his friend and said our hellos. They both seemed so excited about the club and Charlie was full of compliments all around. The club did have a line out the door which looked a mile long coming in, luckily we didn't have to use the front door. Charlie returned from the bar with two giant long-island iced teas, which were his favorite drink to start with and then we just sat for a while watching people dancing. Occasionally conversing about passing thoughts. We danced for a while having a few more drinks and after about two hours, Charlie said he was ready to go home. What a daunting time to look forward to, he always liked to have a brief sexual encounter before drifting off to sleep with my naked body intertwined between his arms and legs.

It was bad enough to have to entertain him at every given second of the day but his grip on me was so stifling I felt so chocked I could hardly breathe much less sleep. Eventually my over-worked mind would drift in-and-out of a restless sleep, but constantly on edge. I thought many of nights of escaping, but where would I go? Would one of Ron's ever-so-connected informants finds me and turns me into him to be disposed of for good? I just prayed that I wouldn't be another missing person to add to the list of girls found in the local ditches. I knew that's where I was headed if I screwed this up for Ron again.

As if my guardian angel was there the whole time listening to my secret prayers, my rescue came the next morning with an abrupt bursting through the bedroom door at about six am. Charlie and I were still lying in bed together and his grip on me was still tight. The men dressed in all black military gear had large guns and helmets on. It was so frightening

at first. I couldn't even comprehend what was happening so rapidly. I thought Charlie could've been in some kind of trouble with a business friend he had done wrong too, but then one of the men in black shouted "F.B.I this is a raid get down with your hands on you head", in too much shock to move three of the men grabbed Charlie and threw him to the floor and cuffed him. I sat up in bed with my sheets covering my naked body and watched as they dragged Charlie from the room. Still completely nude he wasn't even aloud to get dressed. Another agent had to come back in to the room to find him a pair of shorts. I could hear him screaming at the top of his lungs all of the way outside He was screaming and the last thing I heard him yell was "If you say anything you know who will find you!" I could hear more threats being yelled at me but I couldn't make out what it was that he was saying. I was in total confusion and couldn't believe what was happening. There were so many uniformed agents I felt so small compared to all of them but they were all very kind and helped me out of bed allowing me to remain covered up with the bed sheets so I could get dressed. The first decency I had been showed in a long time. It was an odd feeling to acknowledge. I knew the life I had come accustomed to for the last six months was now over, and in so many ways I was relieved but was also very nervous about what lay ahead of me.

I excused myself to the bathroom to put some clothes on. Not having anything half decent, like a normal pair of jeans and a t-shirt. The best I could come up with was a metallic blue miniskirt and a tiny matching top that fell just below my breasts, hardly clothing at all it was more like scraps of cloth. Putting my hair up in a tight bun with the scrunchie that held my five hundred dollar bills I was led out of Charlie's townhouse for the very last time. Starting my life over…again, I wanted to leave behind my every memory belonging to these horrid times. Only taking small sack containing my underwear, makeup bag, and journal with me.

The agents led me down the staircase and my last vision's of Charlie was bent over the hood of a police vehicle still screaming and handcuffed. I slipped into the backseat of the car and was driven to Broward County Police Station where the Federal Agents interviewed me about my entire whereabouts for the last six months. I was so scared of what Ron would do if I told the agents what really happened but at the same token I knew he'd most likely kill me anyways for being such a liability.

Over the next few hours I sat down and told the agents how Ron's business worked and what I part I had to play to him. I was able to ask how they found out I was at Charlie's house and they informed me that I was being followed all the way from Ocala, Florida where Ron had me stowed away for the last four months. T.J, my friend, called my parents after our first phone conversation and ever since then, the F.B.I were tapping the phone lines and recording every conversation. Completely unaware of T.J's caring act of deceit, I was in such shock that they had been tracking us for so long. I knew now, with or without my help, the F.B.I had enough on Ron to put him away for a very long time, if they could catch him, that is.

Having so many crooked people working for you can be an advantage when you're in trouble. Like having a pair of eyes in every city. Ron was somehow able to find out about Charlie's arrest and immediately deserted the country to avoid legal punishment, not to mention the discretization of his esteemed clientele that the feds were now on to. Ron had so many countless charges put up against him, eventually when the F.B.I were able to track him down they were able to have him arrested in Yugoslavia and extradited back to Miami, he was finally held accountable for being a pedophile, soliciting women for prostitution, and running many illegitimate and illegal businesses. By the time the F.B.I caught him he was in his mid-seventies when he died of old age serving his second year prison for a lengthy sentence. Coincidentally I was told of his punishment and death many years later by one of the same F.B.I agents that had rescued me from Charlie's arms.

I was taken out of the interrogation room after the interview was over with and told to sit at one of the officer's desk while I was waiting for someone to pick me up. Uncertain of who that someone would be I assumed it would be someone from the juvenile delinquents division to take me back to some state operated lockdown facility. Not the nicest of places to call home, but I had no choice in this matter.

Sitting back in the revolving chair I was twirling out of boredom and listening to the roaming conversations within the office. I pondered in fearful anticipation of the dreadful places that lay in store for me. Having to of spent a lot of my adolescence in these kind of places for the sheer factor that my mother said "I was out of control and unable to handle" by eleven years old. There was plenty of just reason for me to be so scared of those places. What I knew lay in store for me were constant fights between the rough girls being settled with violent raids then out came the pepper spray and then the strip-searches and worst of all, no sunlight. It didn't matter if you were a quiet, shy girl that didn't belong there, when there was a fight, which was could be like a few times a week, every person in the room was considered a threat and were treated like a violent criminal. I hated those places and the memories they gave me. That's why I always ended up back on the streets. No child or even a juvenile should have to be subjected to such unreasonable force and neglect. Some of the girls were so used to being subdued to this kind of treatment their

whole life they ended up repeating the same attributes as the people who initially hurt them in the first place.

One very sad girl I'll never forget her, had a father who had been a heroine junkie and decided to play Russian Roulette with some of his addict friends and by fate or chance took the bullet straight through his brain, killing him instantly. Her mother being a heroine addict herself spiraled downwards after his death and gave her four year old child to her ageing grandmother that eventually had to put my twelve year old friend in this un-dire circumstance. I can only have he highest hopes for her today but unfortunately for most girls that have been victimized by society aren't able to ever stop being a victim for the rest of their lives or go on to make other people victims themselves. A sad and unfortunate fate for so many innocent, and it happens so much more than anyone would rather admit too instead of just trying to find a solution.

Chapter 3

Hours later I was still twirling myself in the same office chair when I spun around to see my Father walking in my direction. I nearly fell off my seat at the sight of him. Gripping the chairs handles I couldn't imagine what in the world I would say to the man I once used to call Daddy but now hated for the abandonment and unforgiving wounds he instilled inside of me. He contemplated putting his arms out to hold me but instead anger and shame took over and he just shook his head. I never saw my Dad cry until that day and I have to say it made me feel young again and sad I had disappointed my parents again. The agents now standing beside us led both of us together back into the interrogation room to re-tale my journey to my father who they said I had no choice to tell, or they would have to tell him for me, being I was an under-aged minor and Ron violated the statutory rape law, among many others, when he took me back to his apartment and kept me as his sex slave. My Dad couldn't believe what he was hearing and for his lack of better choice in words asked me to stop talking, he was just happy to know I was alive. Like everyone I'd known in life they would rather brush it under the carpet and not deal with the pain rather than realizing sooner or later it all comes out sometime in our life even if it transgresses into our future then becomes what we are willing to accept out of partners, work, and people in general. Simply saying in other ways than with words that our bad decisions befall our tragedies later on in life.

The next discussion was led to where I would go to from here. Before anyone could put his or her suggestion forward I leapt in with my two bits and made it obviously clear to my Dad that if I was sent away to another lockdown facility and if he betrayed my trust, again, he would never see me again. I would disappear for good this time and for all he would know I could be dead in no time on the streets. He looked at me and for the first time in my life he saw the many years I had grown up in the time I was gone and heard the seriousness in the tone of my voice when I made my vow to him. He put his head in his hands and told me the bad news, my Mom didn't want me to come home and she was making his life hell for even suggesting bringing me back into their lives. I for some reason threatened her lifestyle and drove her crazy. I had been surprised about a lot of things lately but not that one. The last time I saw my Mom she ever so carefully lied to me and told me she was bringing me to an eye-doctor for an infection. Instead we walked into this tall blue building with people in uniforms holding clipboards and a few muscly guards, she ushered me inside and hurried up to close the large auto lock doors behind her leaving me there alone and imprisoned, which is what led me to recently living on the streets. My life was hell as long as she was in control of it, so when she didn't want me back at home I was fine with that too, but there had to be somewhere else I could go. My dad said he had no choice but to put me back into the facility, but he made a sincere promise that he would not take any longer than a week to try to find a place for me to stay and to go to school. A week I could deal with, but I was still unsure if I could trust my father and hold him to his word, but yet again, I had no choice. Being my legal guardian he could send me anywhere he wanted and there would be nothing I could do, except for keep running. I gave in, and before he left the officers to take me back to the last facility I had run from, I gave him one last hug and reminded him "one-week and I'm gone". Nodding his head and squeezing his arms tighter around me, I could only hope he meant it, but he didn't look too optimistic.

In the police car on the way back to the facility they had to handcuff me in case I ran again, but I had no intentions to anyways. I was going to give my dad the week before I began to search for the right opportunity to jolt again. I was like a "ghost come back," said so many of my girlfriends from the past and there was now a lot of new faces there too. At night when we were all in bed and supposed to be sleeping, I would be daydreaming of better days and imagine myself somewhere in a comfortable bed, actually enjoying my life for a change. A week went by in this facility spending most of my days locked up in what they called "The White Room", a bare room with concrete flooring, no toilet or even a chair to sit on. The only comfort I had was the blue sweater that was provided as part of the uniform, and my hair scrunchie filled with my stowed away cash that no one had found during my unpleasant strip-searches. I would spend hours in the white room for objecting to their

conformity and unwilling to participate in their drilling regime. I didn't feel like I owed any explanation to these people even when they brought a physiologist in to speak with me, "What was the point when I would be gone any day now" and as if any of these people even cared in the first place, I was just another number in the system and they had a job to do.

There was one mega-bitch, female guard, named Evelyn and she used to either really like you or really hate you and God-forbid you were one of the unfortunates that she didn't like, she'd make your entire stay their an agonizing nightmare. Constantly picking on girls who were not strong enough to cope with their predicament or past issues, she'd stand them up and publicly humiliate them, and even when they begged her through their sobs to let them sit down, she'd only torment them worse. Which only made the strong girls want to antagonize the fragile one's with more malicious intent. Luckily when I had previously been there she didn't take much notice of me, but I stayed out of harms way with her, just being quiet and observant.

Being back here seemed like an eternity while I held my end of the bargain but unfortunately my Father didn't. The first chance I saw to run I took it. I was being sent to go get my blood and urine taken for drug and disease analysis. My driver would be a volunteer from the community and it was the perfect getaway for me. I was brought from the white solitaire room and led into the bright sun, feeling like today would be favorable in my escape. We got to the doctors office, my whereabouts told me I had plenty of ways to run and I scouted out the best looking route. My plan was to barge through the volunteer's inexperienced grip and wriggle my way out if needed, then hit the asphalt, running until my legs couldn't carry me any further. Playing it out in my mind felt different to the anticipation that led up to actually doing it. The inner-strength I had was the only thing going to help me in this circumstance.

We arrived in the parking lot and I hadn't said a word to him the entire drive, the small framed Spanish man tried to make pleasant conversation but I couldn't see him as anything but a challenge, so I kept quiet instead, ignoring his humorous attempts to befriend me. The car pulled to a stop and he came around the side to unlock my door, this was it, "here we go" I told myself, and pushed past the volunteer. His arms grabbed out at me but only caught me by my shirt, he didn't even put up much of a struggle, like some of the other trained one's I had gotten before, they would put me into body locks of all sorts but he just tore at the collar of my shirt letting me break free. I had done this many times before so I knew I wasn't gone yet, I had to first get out of these clothes. The cops would be looking for someone of my description in the area with a blue shirt and khaki pants, so my first stop was a busy shopping complex. I took the money from my scrunchie and bought myself a pair of jeans, a shirt, and a sweater for disguise and my next stop was Dunkin Doughnuts' to get a chocolate iced doughnut and a cup of coffee. I didn't have doubts about getting out of the facility but I wasn't expecting it to be so easy this time. My past excursions all began with an abrupt struggle sometimes ending in a brutal state of affairs after being pepper sprayed and fastened into some painful lock by forceful men four- times my size, then tossed into solitary until I saw my next chance to desert. I got to know the guards real well, as I spent a lot of my time being dragged down to the white room by them. There was Jim, a large black man who could've doubled for a "Miami Dolphin's" defensive linebacker. John was another big man with a ponytail and a mustache, and he looked like someone who definitely owned a Harley. The last guy Scott had a smaller build but made up for it with his steroid injected muscles bulging out of his neck and their was the added height from his curly fro. When they weren't restraining me and holding me captive in solitaire, they were actually pretty nice guys, not afraid to have a laugh after some explosive incident and I held no contempt towards them either, they were just doing their jobs.

It was de'ja'vous all over again, free at last but where would I go now. With Ron's scouts on the lookout for me, and now the authorities being notified I was a runaway again, I would have a lot of people searching for me, so I knew I had to be careful where I went. My last stop before leaving the shopping center was to use a payphone to call my parents, my Dad answered completely surprised to hear me on the other end, I wanted to sarcastically thank him for breaking his promise to me and I hope he is happy now, he just lost his daughter for good. I stopped to listen to what he was trying to say and he told me "I was getting you out in a few days, I found you somebody to stay with, she's a good person who has got teenagers your age, I was just trying to convince your Mother to sign the papers to get you out of there".

I was so outraged at her ability to put her own wants before the needs of her own flesh and blood daughter. I told him to come pick me up and bring me to the house so I could speak with her for the first time in over a year, but if I felt threatened for one second I will be on my way quicker than a blink of an eye and on my own for good. He wasn't overjoyed at my proposition, knowing what position this put him in as her husband but as my father he decided to put me first for once and take me home to confront my mother.

I arrived at my house for the first time in a long time and everything looked different. My parents refurnished and renovated the house. I didn't even have a room anymore, my old belongings and bed were removed and it was now the office. Of course my Mom didn't meet me at the gate or the front door like her long lost offspring reunited. No, instead she waited for me to come find her outback smoking cigarettes and having a beer. She stood up from her seat and squinted her eyes loathing in her hatred she coldly slapped me hard in the face. The slap stung, but I matched her look with a familiar stone-coldness that only she could understand. Immediately we both started to cry and we washed away our anguish and resentment through our tears and consolidated our feelings for the first time since the chaos first affected our lives. She didn't want to know much of my whereabouts and she still had a lot of anger to get over but she asked me to stay home at least. My little brother ran through the back door and hugged me so tight, I started to cry again and was saddened by how much time I had missed the time I had lost just hanging out with my brothers and it took me even longer to realize how precious time really is. We were never going to be the average Joes next door but at least this was better than nothing. I loved being with my family again. We had BBQ's and bon-fires with each other and life began to slowly piece back together. It was bizarre how normal it was when I first got home. I turned fifteen that year and it was the exact cup of tea that I had needed to boost me up and get me on the right track.

I decided to go school to acquire my general education diploma or G.E.D and got a summer job with my Dad at Mar-A-Lago, Donald Trumps exclusive country club in Palm Beach. Surrounded by lush acres of tropical landscapes, manicured gardens, and a mansion made into a beach club for the rich and famous it is known as the "Jewel of Palm Beach". I was in sheer awe at the gold arched ceilings and the grandeur ballrooms.

The spa where I worked was world class, not only oozing in style but in the way each and every clientele was treated with the upmost service. My focus was now set on becoming a massage therapist, and working my way into a luxurious spa like the one I worked for now, only I was a locker-room attendant there. I studied many books about the anatomy of the human body and how you can affect a person's well-being and health for the better through a simple healing touch. It was amazing to me the way the body responded to massage. I was more than just interested. I was determined to become a therapist.

It was one of those anatomy books that I had my nose buried in one afternoon on a quiet Tuesday and it could get pretty lonely in the locker room, so if I weren't busy I'd sit outside by the spa's reception and read my books in the warmth of the Florida sun. A lovely looking woman in her late thirties who spoke with a proper English accent approached me. I assumed it was a general question, "like where's the ladies room or was that the famous model from so-and-so?" but she was more interested in the book I was reading. Only believing at first we were just making small talk she was really intrigued at my choice of reading. She then asked if I did massage on the side, I stated I was only reading the book and had not yet began to study but one day I would love to practice massage therapy.

She introduced herself as Ghislane Maxwell. I would later find out that she was the daughter of the late prominent businessman and disgraced newspaper tycoon, Robert Maxwell. I told her my name is Jenna pointing to my nametag on my shirt and offered her a cold or hot beverage, as those were my instructed duties at work. She accepted a tea and went on to chat a bit about this rich guy that she worked for and she knew off-hand that he was looking for a massage therapist. Just doing me a good deed out of her kindness of her heart, I'm sure, she offered to introduce me to him. I declined her first proposition, thinking out loud, told her I didn't know the body well enough to even attempt an interview. She didn't seem worried at all by my fear of incompetence saying that if he liked me enough he would get me the best training in the industry. Ghislane thought I had a cheery persona and fit the quota for what he was looking for and as she put it an enthusiastic learner that she said she gathered from the sticky notes popping out of the various sections in my book. I accepted her phone number and the house address and told her I will call her if I am able to come over after work. I rushed over to the tennis courts where my dad was working and told him of the news. We both thought this could be a wonderful opportunity to get my accreditation in massage therapy. Seeing that it was a lady in her late thirties who came off as more of a nurturer rather than a procurer, neither of us saw any reason to be hesitant.

Chapter 4

At around Five p.m. my dad drove me down to the bottom of "El Brillo Way." on the Palm Beach intercostal. We pulled into a short driveway beckoning a large pink mansion with heavy wooden doors. I was so excited about this chance and asked my dad to wish me luck. He gave me a big squeeze and wished me the best. He walked me to the front door and I rung the door chime. Moments later we were greeted by an older gentleman dressed in a casual butler uniform. I told him I was here to meet Ms. Maxwell for a massage trial and he opened the doors for my father and I telling us to wait in the entry as Ms. Maxwell would be on her way any second, and she was. Down the stairs she walked with a warm smile, her short black hair seeming very proper and elegant, for now. She shook my fathers hand and thanked him for bringing me and kissed us both on the cheeks. They spoke briefly about whom she worked for and about Mar-a-Lago where we worked. She was in hurry, you could tell to end the conversation and say good-bye to my dad, which she did so

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ever pleasantly. She said the boss was upstairs and waiting my arrival, so with that I said bye to my dad and began to follow Ghislane up the stairs. I was so nervous, but I didn't show it. I kept my reserve and demeanor cool as ice, trying show maturity for the open position. We continued on to the massage room, passing by a grand crystal chandelier, and a couple lengthy wooden hall tables displaying a multitude of photos displaying young girls and beautiful women, trying not to gawk at them I didn't even notice that some of those girls were only wearing their smile.

Ghislane asked me how my day at work was and I told her it was easy peasy as always just trying to make simple conversation. There was a fork at the end of the staircase and she led me to the right hand side. The lights were dimmed in the bedroom but I could still see the King Size bed in the middle of room, we did a U-turn around the bed, which led us into a massage room. Dripping in luxury I could've definitely compared it to the renowned Mar-a-Lago's spa's, it had marble walls and a glass enclosed shower and self-automated steam room at the very end of the Burberry carpeted room. There was a large mirror over a basin to the right of the room with an array of oils, ointments, soaps, and lotions and a small closed door, which I assumed must be a closet. The only thing that struck awkward about this room was the naked man laying face down atop of the turquoise massage table in the center of it. "I had to be prepared for this," I told myself. Massage was something I had never done before so I quickly brushed away my thoughts of possible schemes, wanting to believe whole-hearted this was going to be legit. Ghislane introduced us to each other and I proceeded to make his acquaintance.

Looking up at from his downwards position, he looked me over and gave a smile to Ghislane, an obvious notion of his approval. He was Jeffrey Epstein as she pronounced for him, as if I supposed to recognize his name or something. He affirmed, "It was his pleasure" and replied to just call him Jeffrey, "No need for formalities" he answered, cleverly putting me at ease. This man did not look like someone to beware of. Both him and Ghislane appeared to be very nice people and conscious of their health as their need for massages and spa visits, no alarm bells went off, yet. I was prepped by Ghislane to "treat this as a lesson from her and follow her exact lead, if I did good tonight then maybe I would become Jeffrey's Travelling Masseuse, seeing the world and getting paid well for it". I was very hopeful, a job like this could really make my dreams come true.

I followed suit and washed my hands with warm water so the coldness would not shock Jeffery's naked body, then lathered them in rich body butter. Ghislane told me to always keep one hand on Jeffrey, even when getting more lotion, so it didn't make him lose concentration on being relaxed. She gave me a tip and told me to keep a blob of lotion high up on

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my forearm so it prevented me from having to keep going back for more and was less disruptive to Jeffrey. This all seemed for real to begin with, I was being educated about the body and splitting Jeffrey's body with Ghislane, mimicking her every motion. Starting with his feet, we began with his heels and arches of his soles. Pushing the blood up his calves in upward strokes to rejuvenate the body's blood supply and being careful to mind his leg hair didn't pull. I was keeping up with her and enjoying the education. It was so interesting how the body worked and I couldn't believe I was learning all of this for free. Once I got a bit of a groove following Ghislane, they began asking me all sorts of questions about my past and it didn't take long before the conversation led down the darker experiences of my young life. When they found out that I hadn't led much of a normal existence they only probed me with more questions, which being put on the spot answered honestly. The funny thing was they didn't seem appalled at all by my statements, rather entertained if anything. Jeffrey called me a "naughty-girl" with that wry smile of his, and half playful and half defensive, I answered "no I'm not, I'm really a good girl, just always in the wrong places" he then replied, "It's O.K, I like naughty girls" and rolled over onto his front side to expose his complete nude self. He wasn't the first man to show me his penis, so I wasn't shocked at the appearance of his manhood but I was incredibly shocked at his complete ease to present himself with an erection. I tried to ignore it waiting to follow the next directions off of Ghislane, who surprisingly now stood behind me bare breasted. Before I had a chance to even think of replying hastily she began to slowly undress me, while Jeffrey started to stroke his manhood while watching us. She unbuttoned my blouse and removed my bra, revealing my bosoms. Cupping them in her hands she moved her lips across my nipples, licking and teasing them with her tongue making them cold and stiff. Next her hands moved down to my little white skirt, removing the final piece of my remaining uniform. She slid my skirt down my legs with ease, for a moment keeping on my love-heart panties, so they could both take notice of my apparent youth. They even snickered to each other about " How cute she still wears little girl pantie's" Jeffrey said, and Ghislane joined in his laughter.

Acting as my madam, she instructed me to start by licking his nipples and after I had sufficiently pleasured both of them, then prompted me to go down on Jeffery orally while she rubbed her breasts along his body tantalizingly. She moved behind me again this time to remove my panties and start fondling the delicate folds between my legs. I was still in shock from the initial degrading blow. I hadn't even let the reality sink in, it was all too much for me to emotionally handle so instead I hid behind my fears, which I told myself "I wasn't going to ever be worth anything at all and this would probably be as good as it gets for me" after all I thought,

"what have I been trained up for until now". Nobody ever stopped to ask if I was comfortable or if I wanted to stop, no, instead, Ghislane only directed me to conclude the massage session by climbing up on the table to be fixated on Jeffrey, straddling him so he could penetrate me.

When it was all done and over with, I was taken into the steam room with just Jeffrey to get further aquatinted, as Ghislane left the room to go get dressed. He asked me to grab his feet and rub them not saying a word about what just happened, like it was all normal and accepted. I listened to him ramble on about the health benefits of a sauna and the history of it, ignoring the fact of the matter of his pretentiousness degrading my spirit. I figured I had gone too far already, what would be the point in throwing in the towel now after I had done exactly what these people wanted.

Whilst we were sweating out our bodies' toxins, and the steam was blasting my burning face I listened to his lessons, entertaining his ego, I let him become my teacher, he seemed to like that. He sounded like a very clever and intelligent man though. Telling me his story of how he made himself an empire of billions from being a middle-class professor to an elite financial advisor for clientele with only billions in their bank accounts and through his so-called "lessons", He became my mentor and I emerged as his pupil, the teacher's pet.

After the sauna we went to the next glass door beside us where the shower was. He turned tap outwards and stood underneath the water as I stood naked and cold from the temperature difference. Instead of asking me to join him under the warm stream, like I thought he was going to, he handed me a bar of soap and asked me to wash his body from top to toe. It didn't stop there I had to massage the shampoo and conditioner into his scalp as well. I was bewildered someone would ask this off of someone else, wasn't it belittling enough having to endure the illicit massage from beforehand but now this. The surprises kept coming that night, as this was definitely not how I expected my interview to turn out, but that's what I had learned in my short time on this earth, life was full of disappointment.

I let everyone else take the power of authority from myself and use me in whatever way he or she wanted instead of standing up and giving myself the respect I deserved, which in turn would've helped me get through life without all of the abuse I ended up copping. Not given the belief in myself from an early age on I suppose is what affected my sense of control. Always letting the one's with power and strength reduce my inner-self to shreds until I was cut so tiny in size I would be completely subdued to only their wants and needs left ignoring mine. The men I had encountered in my short experience with them only repeated their inflictions convincing me there was no running away from the sick world I lived in, not yet understanding it all came down to the choices I had made for myself, I needed some encouragement and the right words to unlock my very soul.

Jeffrey told me the towels were on the heated rack just outside the shower and asked me to get one and pat him down. Again putting himself first as I sat there freezing while I compliantly patted down his body with the white fluffy towel until he was dried. I nearly expected him to ask me to dress him as well, but not surprisingly that came later down the track too. I dried myself off and wiped the make-up from under my eye's, keeping quiet not sure what to really say and half-embarrassed from the entire evening's events that just took place. I just remained silent whilst we both got dressed until he brought me downstairs where Ghislane was sitting at a desk holding his black leather duffel bag. When she moved from the chair to let Jeffrey sit down, she passed him the bag and began to tell me that I had great potential to be a massage therapist, they really liked my style and who knows where this could lead too. She asked to see me again tomorrow, same time after work. He opened the bag, revealing stacks of brand-new hundred dollar bills separated with rubber bands to count by the thousands. He grabbed one stack and took out two crisp notes, placing them in my hand. He laughed that it was nearly my whole week's wage at Mar-A-Lago. Only there I didn't have to degrade myself as his new little toy.

When I got home my parents were anticipating my arrival. I kept it simple and sweet with my folk's, only telling them of the lessons about the body I had received and the future prospects in massage therapy that lie ahead. Nobody questioned who I was working for and complimented my ability to be a hard worker. I quickly got out of that conversation afraid I might give away a hint of shame in my eyes but no one caught on. I excused myself to the bathroom to have a shower and stared into the mirror for a moment, asking myself if I could really go through with this only to mentally respond by reminding myself this would be as good as it gets for a girl of my stature and limitations. I scrubbed myself rigidly in the shower as if it would wash away the filthiness of the night, but it didn't help, I could still feel their hands in me and all over me and inside of me. Trying to sleep that night was nearly impossible too, closing my eyes only to drift away to flashbacks of the moments I had to give myself to Jeffrey and Ghislane, each replay an exploitation of my vulnerability.

The next morning I awoke feeling anxious about the day ahead, trying to push yesterday's memory from my thoughts, I was quiet for the whole trip to work with my Dad. Before we got out of his car in the parking lot he asked me if everything was okay, I lied, for his sake and mine. My life was being transformed and I didn't even know it yet, but soon enough I would be a brainwashed tool only used for the sexual pleasure of others.

About to be entrapped in the same life I had broken free from only months ago.

Convincing myself in order to succeed I had to step up from being a girly teenager and start thinking like a young woman, it would be my ticket to a great career and a fortunate life. I told myself "So what if I had to bargain my body to this rich old geezer, some girls get themselves through college by becoming a stripper and using their bodies to pay for degrees, others go down even worse paths." I guess it was just another way to fathom the road I was going down, the effectiveness of the lies I forced myself to believe was working as I continued to tell myself I had to make it any way I could rather than ever letting myself sleep on the streets again. I was trading one shocking lifestyle for another, thinking I was choosing the right one. If I could go back in time to ever meet myself I would choose this time in my life. I'd start with a good hard smack to my head to first shake some things up in there and next I would tell that girl she could actually make it on her own if she just worked hard at earning an honest wage and built her life up slowly. There is no rush or time limit to ever stop reaching for achievement. Sadly enough I probably wouldn't of even believed myself anyways, learning my life's hard lessons through the experiences I continued to suffer.

I went to work at Mar-A Lago that day trying hard not to think of what lay ahead in the afternoon too come, but the later the hour got the more distinguished the knots became in my stomach. I spoke to no one of the details to my explicit interview but told one girl how I was so happy I was now officially studying massage therapy, another lie. My friend was surprised and intrigued that these people who could afford the best of the best of therapists in the world chose an untrained fifteen-year-old girl to perform a massage. She never said it in words, but her body language told me she knew exactly why they wanted to use me and it wasn't for a therapeutic reason either and deep down inside I understood.

The rest of the afternoon slipped away quickly and before I knew it I was standing before those large wooden doors again, giving a moments pause but long enough to draw in my breath and exhale some of the anxiety before ringing the doorbell. Juan answered the door again and told me Ghislane would be down in a few moments and asked to follow him into the kitchen. There was a pleasant looking young girl with blonde spirals in her hair that glanced up from the mound of paperwork before her. Her shocking blue eye's and appealing English accent seemed delightful and she introduced herself as "Emmy", Ghislane's Personal Assistant. I introduced myself as "Jenna" which is what most people knew me as and told her I was on an employment trial to become Jeffrey's massage therapist. She had a coy smile on her face that told me she knew exactly what I was on trial for. Something in my gut told me this wasn't the first time a young girl had been trialed for the same position I was about to fill.

We were only chatting for a moment before Ghislane appeared and told me Jeffrey was ready for his massage. I was led through the extensively large house to the winding staircase that would lead me up to the same dreaded room where I would have to re-enact last night's performance. I wasn't far from wrong. I gave Jeffrey a massage with Ghislane leading the way again, this time we surprisingly made it to the front of his body and she continued to show me how to massage all the way up to his stomach pushing my hands in a spiraling clockwise circular motion to not disrupt the bowels and then we came up to his chest. He couldn't dare contain himself for one second longer, telling me to put my lips on his nipples and give them a kiss. Jeffrey moaned in pleasure and Ghislane started to undress me from behind. Within moments I was completely naked and Ghislane had her top off. She was caressing my body with her hands while Jeffrey moved his hands down to stroke his loins while he watched her and I kiss and touch each other. I didn't know if she was doing this for the sake of his eye-candy but she sure did act like she loved having the control over me telling me what to do throughout the entire threesome. Jeffrey's climax was always the end to our sessions and this time he wanted to have me make him orgasm orally. Afterwards we went for the ritualistic steam-room, this time Ghislane joining in with us for conversation. She asked me to massage her feet this time while we were in the steam room, showing me that Jeffrey wasn't the only one I had pay my homage to. We all had a shower next and then we all went downstairs to pay me and have Juan drop me off back home.

The following afternoon I received a call at work, surprisingly it was Ghislane asking me to come over when I got off of work again. The compliant side took over and I told her I looked forward to meeting with them today, instead of telling her to go screw herself for lying to me and making me degrade myself more each time I saw them. I finished work for the day and my Dad brought me over to El Brillo Way again, where the vultures were patiently waiting in their lair, he wished me well as I hopped out of his big truck, looking ever so much like his little girl again. I gave him a smile and a wave as he drove down the long driveway, waiting for him to suddenly turn back and not leave me alone to my task. I shook myself out of that calamity and put on my "big girls" face.

Juan brought me to the kitchen again as I waited for Ghislane. He offered me a cold drink and some fruit on a platter, I accepted and was grateful for the rejuvenation before I went to work again. It wasn't long before Ghislane approached me from behind with a cold intense look in her eye. I jumped from my seat, feeling like maybe I shouldn't have been eating and drinking while on the job, as her demeanor seemed annoyed and temperamental in the seconds that she appeared. She told me I would be on my own today as she had business to attend to, so make sure I remembered what she had taught me, as my trial depended on it.

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Chapter 5

I walked up the stairs by myself this time, taking in more of the décor, noticing the more I looked around the more I noticed a different girl in each photograph in his collection of half-nude and topless girls on display around his mansion. I couldn't believe how many girls there were, it's not like Jeffrey was much to look at. He was an aging man in his early fifties with shiny grey hair and characteristic lines drawn down his face as if he had seen harder days. With no prospects of ever settling down or having a family of his own, Jeffrey treated us girls like a piece of clothing he could try on for the day and get rid of the next. So why was there so many girls in these photo's? I wondered to myself if I would end up one of those girls among his collection of forgotten relationships and broken promises.

I continued to make my way up the stairs, and as if all of my senses were heightened from my bare nerves being exposed, I could smell the cleaning detergents recently used by the housekeepers, my observations of the shade of lighting through the concealed blinds as I entered Jeffrey's bedroom appeared golden, and the sound of stillness except for the thud of my rapid beating heart all made me more aware of how nervous I was to be on my own. Not that Ghislane was anything of a comfort, but I didn't know what to expect or how I was going to lead myself into upholding my obligation in pleasing him. I would hope for the best I thought, trying to uplift my confidence as I opened the door to the massage room with the typical scene of Jeffrey laying naked facedown in the massage bed waiting for his entertainment. It was de'ja'vous' all over again. Repeating what Ghislane had taught me, with him commenting on what else I should be doing, until it got to the end and I was expected to grant him all of his spoken desires. We finished up with the shower again and he seemed very pleased in my contribution of myself to him, giving in to every request.

He told me to go ask Juan to pay me, as he was lethargic after the massage and intimate affair between us and now was going to have sleep. I walked back down stairs and told Juan that Jeffrey was asleep and said I had to ask him for my pay. He went to Jeffrey's desk and took out the exact amount I was owed without even asking how much I normally get paid. He then drove me home, only to be back the next afternoon.

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The following week was a daily routine, providing Jeffrey with massages and continuously being groomed to fulfill all his needs. Often joined by Ms. Maxwell and her assistant Emmy for sexual trysts of all kinds. I was mentally and physically exhausted from the week of working and having to keep up with Jeffrey's strenuous late night activities. I couldn't believe what I was doing but it was all starting to sink in fast. Most nights when I got home, I'd briefly say "Hi" to Mom and Dad before heading straight to my bedroom. I couldn't even sleep well anymore. Closing my eyes at night I would fight the inevitable flood of thoughts, replaying the moments of shame that ate away myself piece by piece. My only reasoning being I just had to keep telling myself it would all be worth it in the end.

This afternoon Ghislane appeared to be in a much better mood. Instead of taking me straight up to Jeffrey she took me to a yellow guest room where Emmy mostly stayed. It had a balcony where Emmy was already outside reading a magazine and puffing on a cigarette. Ghislane lit one up too and then offered me one. I hadn't smoked cigarettes much before, besides trying to look cool in front of one of my friends, but never really took to them, so when I started to cough from the inhalation of smoke, the girls began to laugh and joke about my in-experience. It was an icebreaker for all of us to laugh and poke fun at me. I was then able to give it back to them saying I would rather be an in-experienced non-smoker than an old lady with a raspy smokers cough. I don't think Ghislane was used to somebody giving it back to her, but she seemed to like it, as long as she was able to have the last say. I knew my boundaries and she liked that I wouldn't cross those invisible lines. All three of us chatted like friends and it started to feel like some kind of a strange relationship was budding. After about fifteen minutes of chatting away, Ghislane instructed me to wash my hands thoroughly, as Jeffrey hated the smell of smokers, and to follow her down the hallway to the massage room where he'll be expecting me shortly. I did what she asked and sprayed myself with the body spray that I always carried in my purse and headed down the hall to Jeffrey's room.

When I opened the door to the massage room surprisingly it was empty. I sat down on the already made up massage table and was careful not to mess up the neatly folded towels on the end of the bed. It was a good fifteen more minutes before Jeffrey made his appearance. It was strange seeing him in clothes for the first time. He wasn't wearing what you'd expect your typical billionaire's attire to be. He was wearing a pair of sweatpants and a Harvard sweatshirt, which he began to remove immediately. This time he wanted to commence our session in the steam room, so I began to undress as well. We went into the steam room and he pushed a few buttons and the steam began to pour in from the marble wall's built in jets. There was a bench coming out of the wall also made out of marble that went from either side of the room and had a step underneath it where I was instructed to sit on so that I could begin giving Jeffery his massage. Our conversation started off about simple things like how was your day at work, and I asked Jeffrey how his day was lounging around, just being polite to each other. He was acting out of character being a lot more attentive and conversing with me about other things than sex or massages for once. Starting with his heels, ankles, toes and arches in the soles of his feet I massaged all the way up to his calves. It took a lot more strength to massage in the steam room without oils or lotions and the constant blowing of steam in your face making me twice as exerted. I was beginning to really start to heat up when the door to the room suddenly opened to reveal two naked women. Ghislane and Emmy acted as if they came in to join us for a steam bath, but my instincts were telling me otherwise. At least the cold burst of air and escaped steam revived me a bit.

So there was Jeffrey and Ghislane sitting on top of this marble bench, each with a young girl at their feet. Emmy and I continued with the massage until they were ready to head into the shower. There were two showerheads that Ghislane and Jeffrey both stood under while they were being lathered with soap bubbles as we washed their bodies. After the shower Ghislane led us into Jeffrey's bed to finish today's session with Emmy, Ghislane and I performing lesbian acts of foreplay on each other while Jeffrey laid back and watched. Stroking his manhood in much delight, he brought himself to climax, and the session was over within moments. We all got dressed and went downstairs to the kitchen for some refreshments. Like nothing had happened at all, it was all so bizarre for me, the whole ordeal with them since this all began. I couldn't understand why Ghislane and Jeffrey had such an openly intimate relationship but yet never regarded themselves as partners. They rarely kissed and never held hands or even slept in the same bed. It was more like a sexual arrangement between the two of them. She brings in the girls for his peculiar taste and he supplies the lavish lifestyle she was accustomed too before her family lost all of their fortunes. I wasn't sure how to act or feel, always obliging to their needs but reserved enough not to get attached, as if there was this invisible hierarchy and by instinct I knew my place.

We all hung out in the kitchen for a while before I asked when Juan could bring me home as I had work in the morning and was tired. They said no problem and called Juan on the intercom right away, but said we'd all have something to talk about tomorrow. I knew it had something to do with my employment trial and from the way they were acting tonight, I could only assume I got the job, but you never know with these types of people. Their friendships and partnerships can change like the weather.

I went home that night still confused on how I could let myself sink so low, I had to put on an act like I enjoyed submitting my body and being their new subservient plaything all for the fact that I was making anywhere between $200-$400 for just a couple of hours. Then spent the rest of the night regressing on the entire event in my head over and over again. I battled those thoughts with the hope that I was receiving a profession out of this and making good money in the meantime. All I had to do was keep lying to myself long enough until I eventually believed it.

Arriving at Jeffrey's on time the next afternoon, as I always did, understanding punctuality was a sign of respect and I wanted them to feel as if they had my deepest appreciation for the once in a lifetime chance they had given to a girl of my history. This time when Juan answered the door he told me Mr. Epstein and Ms. Maxwell were waiting for me upstairs in the massage room. I began my hike up the familiar spiraling staircase and through to the room where my arrival was being deeply anticipated. They were already in the steam room awaiting me to join them. I undressed out of my uniform and folded them in a neat pile, which I placed upon the marble basin. Having one last look in the mirror before I exhaling a deep breath as if I was plunging into deep water, I knew today was a big day. I either accepted their offer and trade my morals for opportunity, or walk away with the prospect of one day many years from now trying to make it on my own which I knew endowed hardships of there own.

So confused about what decision to make, I just opened the door to the steam room and let them do the talking. Used to the routine by now I sat below Jeffrey and began to massage his feet and legs as I listened in on their ongoing conversation about travel plans for the next few weeks. Ghislane and Jeffrey turned their attention to me and he asked me how would I like to go see the big city of Manhattan. I told them I had never visited New York before and it sounded like an adventure but my job at Mar-A-Lago was only a summer job and wouldn't be able to get the time off, especially that summer was so busy anyways.

Jeffrey then made his announcement, that I should just quit my job at Mar-a-Lago and become his permanent travelling masseuse. He then further persuaded me with all of the luxuries that came along with my acceptance. Rather than being paid $9 dollars per hour at my current job I could be earning $200 dollars per massage, which he even said could be a few times a day. Tomorrow we could be leaving Palm Beach together in his private jet first heading to his residence in the upper east side of Manhattan, also the largest mansion in N.Y, and would next be setting off to the Caribbean, where he owned a secluded island just past Little St. James for a bit of relaxation. The temptation of his grandeur offer wasn't hard to give into, my vulnerability to be lewd into his grasp seemed comforting at the time. The idea that females were nothing more than an empty shell of beauty bound by only a body to offer was a notion I had accepted a long time ago with my first teacher, Ron.

My reaction had to be more than amusing for their egos, even though I was excited to be traveling I could only imagine the likeliness of having to be at their beckon call as well. In my head I just told myself we all do what we have to do in our lives to succeed no matter what it takes, and with no one knowing the truth, I had no one to talk me out of it. I accepted his offer and knew from here on out I would be his servant to his sexual desires until one day I would gain my credentials and only then could I go out on my own and make it in this world that when so young seems so unconquerable. The night advanced into the usual grooming of his requirements, for the next hour and a half being exploited to satisfy Jeffrey's every sexual whim.

My mom cornered me that night, before I had a chance to avoid speaking to anyone, heading to the shower then my bedroom, like I had been the last week. She knocked at my door with a hostile look in her eyes, " Virginia, what exactly does an older couple want with a fifteen year old girl, who has no credentials and with no experience in massage therapy?" She used that stern tone of voice that she's always had, when I was in trouble.

Thus, as impressionable as I was, my blue eyes batted their innocence in her direction and I flashed her a girlish grin selling her the pitch that I had been given earlier that night. Not mentioning the other side to the glamorous lifestyle I would soon be living in. I told her about the money I'd be earning, the places I'd be seeing, the people I could meet and most of all the trade I'd be learning. It all sounded so good, except it was a bunch of lies I had to tell her and myself to otherwise convince us, that this was a once in a lifetime opportunity, and I had to take it.

She asked when all of this would start, and I as shocking as it was to me too, I told her I had to go start packing. We were leaving the next morning off to N.Y.C. At fifteen most girls would be sucking up to their parents to go to a high-school dance or to go on a date to the movies with a nervous chap, but I wasn't even asking her. I was simply letting her know that I would be away for the next couple weeks, maybe three and would keep in contact when I got free time. Her daughter was lost a long time ago, and she just now realized it. Backing out of the bathroom, with nothing she could say, she left me wondering to myself who I was becoming.

Instead of driving me to work the next morning my Dad dropped me off at Jeffrey's mansion, he told me not to worry about calling Mar-A-Lago, he'd take care of it for me. We said our good-byes outside in the driveway, Jeffrey even coming outside to meet with my father to shake his hands and assure him that his daughter will be more than looked after. I hugged my dad tightly, feeling like I was on the verge of a steep cliff, when he let go, so did the last of my innocence.

Juan drove Jeffrey, Ghislane and I to Palm Beaches' Private Airport and the luggage handlers escorted us on the tar mat where we all boarded on Jaffrey's black jet. Larry was his main pilot, he had shiny grey hair and long lanky legs, but a very sincere smile that instantly made you feel at ease. He greeted us at the staircase that led into the main cabin. It was as lavish as I imagined it would be. The seats were enveloped in the finest beige leather with polished wood grain finishes and there was a kitchen in the back with an adjoining toilet. Jeffrey saw the amazement in my eyes and to make it more thrilling he brought me up to the cockpit and let me watch with a bird's eye view of the take off. I was on a natural high when I came back to the cabin and was instantly brought back down when Jeffrey rested his bare feet on top of the reclined seat and instructed me to get to work and start massaging him. My future was in his hands now, so when he wanted something, I wouldn't hesitate in giving it to him.

Chapter 6

Upon our arrival at New Jersey's Private Airstrip, the driver Jo-Jo met us. His name was most likely shortened for something of his oriental decent. Jeffrey liked to shorten the names of his multi-cultural staff into American names. Even Juan and Maria were known as John and Mary. We arrived in the Upper East Side of Manhattan. His principal place of residence was the largest home in Manhattan, eight stories of opulence. It used to be a Private School for boy's many years ago, until Les Wexner, Jeffrey's best friend and mentor bought it for him as a mysterious gift.

There were two large Chinese gargoyles outside the entrance, and beside the heavy looking wooden doors there was an intercom with a camera overlooking us. I walked up the concrete steps into a realm of wealth, glamour and most of all influence. My eye's glistened at the splendor of his palace. Caramel colored marble tiles spread through the first floor, where his gourmet kitchen and dining hall were also located. Then I came to this sweeping staircase that curved into the next level where Jeffrey and I went into his office, even though it looked more like a museum exhibit. Ancient draperies that told lascivious stories of their own covered parts of the elevated walls, and the remaining wall spaces were taken up by rows on top of rows of books. He loved to read, as he often found it hard to sleep and was comforted in the early morning hours with his literature, or sometimes in other ways I would come to find out. There was a mantle piece and a sofa with two armchairs next to the grand piano that flaunted more of Jeffrey's beautiful conquests, young women posing in salacious pictures, suggesting I could be easily replaced next to one of those girls if I failed in keeping him satisfied. There were also some pictures with recognizable political and royal figures either shaking Jeffrey's hand, or with an arm around each other, even one with Jeffrey and the Dali Lama, although his church was the bank. He liked to use his power, wealth, and money to manipulate everyone in his life.

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He made a phone call that sounded business like and I didn't mind, I was quite enjoying taking in all of the beauty around me, I was blinded by all of it. I was still waiting for him when, Ghislane came in. She asked me what I thought so far of my trip to N.Y.C, I knew she was talking about the house, she loved to gloat, even though none of it actually belonged to her, she wanted everyone to believe that it did. I complimented her on the mid-evil looking tapestries and a few other adornments, when she cut me off mid-sentence to compliment it herself, telling me the history about one of the 17th century tapestry's which to an unsophisticated eye, looked to me like a rug on the wall.

Jeffrey hung the phone up and walked over to the sofa where we were sitting next to the mantle piece and took a seat on one of the armchairs. He didn't seem worried from the phone call but his mind was definitely somewhere else from the hard look on his face. We all spoke for a few moments more about the splendid décor before Jeffrey had enough small talk and needed some of his own relaxation time. He told Ghislane he was going to show me to the massage room and he'd be back in a couple hours. She agreed he looked like he could use some time to unwind and with that wry grin of hers, she gave me a look that told me precisely how he was expecting to be relaxed.

We left his office all together, Ghislane going downstairs, and Jeffrey showing me to the lifts. The lift looked like it's original that came with the school. It was made out of brass antique with archaic cuts throughout the arches at the top. It wasn't the only lift in the house, but certainly the most beautiful. We walked down a long hall carpeted in a royal red and golden trim, passing by a bronze pagan statue of the horny little goat God "Pan". How adequate, I thought, fit Jeffrey to a tee. We walked into this dimly lit room. Another daunting chamber that looked like we had stepped back in time to the dark ages. It took a second for my eyes to adjust to the darkness, and Jeffrey beckoned me to follow him through the room to the open adjoin shower, toilet and steam room. The room was in black marble to accent the dreariness, and smaller than the one in Palm

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Beach, but it had it's own witchery feel to it. Another unseen side to this Man I was coming to know.

We both undressed and I followed Jeffrey into the steam room first. He loved feeling clean, teaching me that the steam would deplete the toxins from your skin, which was great during a massage when your blood flow is being replenished. I grabbed his foot out of instinct, knowing I had to be constantly on alert to keep this man satisfied. He looked down at me with a nod and reclined back against the wall as the steam pored in, this was his idea of alleviation. I worked up to his calves and within a few more minutes, he said he was ready for his massage on the bed. We got out and towel dried off, both still nude, he asked me to stay undressed, then we headed to massage bed in the middle of the room. He lay down on the bed and told me to turn on the CD player on the wall hutch, where all of the oils and lotions were set out, I hit play and a collection of mixed classical symphonies began to fill the silence. I could tell he wasn't in one of those moods to be uplifted with idle chat, so I remained silent, letting him enjoy my slow movements, making my way up his body. My instincts told me I was right about his mood, as he seemed to appreciate the quietness of moment and the leisurely of the strokes I was using to massage him. When I got to his scalp he turned over, and grabbed my hand to put on his erect manhood. No words spoken yet, I took the gesture and initiated what I had been taught over the last week. While pleasing my master his hands groped my young flesh, penetrating my insides with his fingers, he was only concerned with what he wanted, as If I was a new car out for a test drive and he was pressing his new gadgets. His soft moans were soon brought to louder heaves of breath and my job was done. No intimate kisses, or sweet pillow talk. He showed his appreciation with money, never attachment. We concluded with a shower and he told me he had some business to conduct. He walked me to the lift and told me go to the next level and my room was the first one on the right, it had an intercom in which he can contact me when needed.

I hit number 5 on the lift and took his directions to my room. I opened the door to this massive loft, the size of an adequate house. I walked down the long hall and my eyes took in the magnificence of my surroundings. It was a room fit for royalty, and later would find out had been stayed in by some. The room was trimmed in gold paint and had another eerie tapestry on the main wall as feature. There was a T.V and a huge king sized bed, with goose feathered comforter and pillows.

All of the glitter from Jeffrey's lifestyle he was offering me finally covered the last bit of sight I had left and I let go of my consciousness. Excited by my enthralling day, not having anyone around to have to act reserved, I jumped into the soft bed and lay looking around, thinking about how quick life could change based upon one swift decision. Dazing into the artistry, the intercom buzzed on the telephone next to the bed and it was a housemaid letting me know Jeffrey wanted to see me in his office now. "Already" I thought to myself, I was just getting settled in. I was worried I was going to get lost in this ancient museum, but I got myself back to his office with no trouble, it was kind of hard to miss. I knocked at the slightly ajar door and Jeffrey called for me to enter. I walked over to his desk, where he was just ending a phone call and he opened his duffel bag full of money. "I'll be out at my other office for most of the day, so instead of being locked inside I thought you should go do some sightseeing for the day since it is your first trip to the Big Apple" He didn't count how much he was giving me he just handed me a bundle out of the banded $100 dollar bills. He knew just how pull the right strings, making me squeal in delight and give him a kiss in the cheek, since we were never really emotionally intimate, it would be odd to act in any other way, but he seemed to like it.

I ran upstairs to get dressed for "City" shopping and put my make-up on, then hit the streets of N.Y.C, looking for a place to start spending this load of dosh. When I got to the end of 72nd street on 5th Avenue, I had no idea which way to turn, left or right. I thought I'd just follow the lights past Central Park and see the local sights on my way. My eyes were once again peeled back in splendor. I had never imagined a place so busy with the hustle and bustle of all the walks of life. My first stop was to buy a disposable camera and I was off taking photos of every wonder that caught my attention. I didn't do much shopping as I had planned too; I was having too much fun exploring this capacious metropolitan.

When it started to hit dusk I began walking back to Jeffrey's but not before stopping off to enjoy a giant slice of pepperoni pizza, it was the best I had ever had, and considering I was going back to Jeffrey's chickpea and tofu salad's or such. I really hated the healthy cuisine served by Jeffrey's personal chef. I was a naturally skinny girl, never watching what I ate and to eat that food I might as well have chewed on hay. I strolled back to Jeffrey's and was missed. Ghislane scolded me "You shouldn't have been gone so long young lady", "We need to know where you are at all times, you are on call for Jeffrey" I started to apologize, feeling guilty, I didn't want them to think I didn't take my job with them seriously. She cut off my explanation with a short conclusion to this conversation "We will get you a cell phone tomorrow, so we can always find you". I thanked her for her generosity, and she dismissed me to my room. So I wasn't even needed after all, it was just a way for her to place me deeper in their control. The next few days I was on call, as Ghislane said I'd be. Venturing out to the city for only an hour or so at a time, I looked most forward to my outings. I would return to Jeffrey's mansion to attend to his sexual desires and when he was finished with me, I'd be off to my adventures.

On the day before we were to be heading back to Palm Beach, Jeffrey had a new proposition for me. I could make double the money I was making, if I would look for pretty girls and convince them to come back to Jeffrey's to be further persuaded with money to engage in bi-sexual and sexual acts with Jeffrey and I. I asked him how does one actually propose such a thing to a complete stranger? "Well" he said in a build up to another kind of lesson. "If I were you I would use your charm to entice them and my money to bring them, I would tell them you work for a multi-billionaire who has a taste for young, beautiful girls and with his contacts in the acting, modeling, or rich husband world, your boss could help them. All they have to do is come meet me first." If I wasn't so naïve at the time I would've seen that's exactly what he was doing with me, my prospects were massage credentials, but with too much pain from my past, I could only have hope. Not that I was a shy girl, but picking up girls for one reason alone, only to be endorsed for her body, didn't sound like something I could do. But not wanting to displease my master, I told him that I would give it a go. You could tell he was instantly excited with my agreement, he started to reveal the politics of what kind of girls he was looking for. He wasn't into multi-cultural girls, a very chauvinistic perception; he said they had to be uniquely gorgeous to be accepted by him, but definitely no African-American girls, he was racist against anything different to his kind, a very narrow minded way of thinking for such a supposed brilliant man. The list went on and on. No girls with tattoo's or piercing's, or gothics, no drug users, or prostitutes. Basically he wanted everyone's daughter that looked like the girl next door, with blue eyes and blonde curly ringlets. I just nodded and smiled, wanting this to be over with and move on to another conversation, but so worked up from our previous talk, instead he persisted to show me exactly what I was good for to him. He took me up to the highest loft in his large mansion and he lay down on his large bed, expecting me to know exactly what he wanted done. As always, I complied. Part of me hating him for having to degrade myself to be so subservient to his sexual whims, and another part of me was telling myself to be grateful for the opportunities I was being given.

The battles in my head were beginning to cause me too much anxiety, when we got back to Palm Beach, I asked my Mom to make me a doctor's appointment for some headaches I had been getting lately, so she wouldn't question me. I walked out of the doctor's with a prescription for a mind-altering anxiety tablet called "Xanax", not only did it help with anxiety but it also acted as blanket over terrible memories. So when I had to perform degrading acts, I would take a few pills and forget what

happened within the next hour and be able to become someone without a battling conscious.

I spent my sweet 16th birthday on his island in the Caribbean next to "St. James Isle" he liked to call it "Little St. Jeff's", his ego was as enormous as his appetite for fornicating. I was given a birthday cake and a new collection of designer make-up from London. Ghislane made a joke after I blew out my array of candles and said, "I'd be soon getting too old for Jeffrey's taste, and soon they'd have to trade me in." She was only half joking in a sad reality though. A few days after my birthday, a girl was flying out to the island to join us for a few days before flying back to N.Y.C. I was introduced to a pretty girl a few years my senior, named Sarah. She had long ash blonde hair and big brown eyes that hinted she had a cheeky nature. She had known Jeffrey before I had, and he was supposedly trying to help her get an acting job in L.A. She was obviously accustomed to the lifestyle he provided her, making it ever so apparent with her prompt attention she lavished on him. She would do things like strip nude and bathe around the swimming pool, taunting him for sex. She was good at what she did, even putting me at ease with her cool persona and funny jokes. Jeffrey told me privately that she was one of his best at procuring young girls into her entrapment and delivering them to him when he was in town, and when it came to time in the private chambers with Jeffrey, Her and I, it wasn't hard to comprehend. She was devoted to the moment, giving Jeffrey every imaginable lustful desire he could fathom. On the last night there we all took a trip over to St. James to go for a stroll, odd I thought, it was past 7pm and Jeffrey rarely strayed out past then, unless it was some event or dinner party. While Ghislane and him looked the average couple strolling arm in arm through the streets, he said to Sarah and I, "Why don't you two hit the night club here and see if there is anyone interesting to bring back for the evening?" It was more of an order than a request and then I knew why we came out tonight and why Sarah was invited, tonight was all about training, and Sarah was going to show me the ropes in picking up girls. Although there was no one to accustom to Jeffrey's distinct taste to bring back, watching Sarah flirt from girl to girl like a floating butterfly, gave me enough insight into what I was expected to do.

Within Months I had become his handy little helper. Not only would I run to his beckon call, but I also aided Ghislane in bringing in more girls to keep the appetite of our sexually starving chief from going hungry. I once asked Ghislane, why she did what she did for him, instead of having a common monogamous relationship and getting jealous like normal partners would? She replied simply "It takes the pressure off me having to do it". That said it all, we were all under the shade of Jeffrey's money tree, and not even someone like her could escape from its lure.

Just like Ghislane had trained me it was now my job to reiterate that onto other girls and thus the cycle of girls trying to climb the chain of hierarchy would start all over each time I brought a new one in. The sessions rarely differed much. They would mostly start out with Jeffrey on top of the massage table already naked and me leading a girl into massaging him until his instructions came to remove our clothing and if they agreed to that, then Jeffrey knew he had them in his pocket, and could do what ever else he wanted. He was never turned down in the many years I stayed with him. Never being shy, he would tell us to start kissing each other or depending on what he wanted we would perform erotic acts sometimes with him fondling us, or just masturbating while he watched. On explicit occasions, sex toys would be used on us girls, making it all the more exciting for him to observe. Ending with a payment of $200 for the new girl and $400 to me for bringing her. He would then wait for us to leave before adding the events details of names and payments in a little black diary he kept with him wherever he went, so if he were in anyone of the city's he lived in, he would always have contacts for sex.

I was slowly climbing the ladder, as Jeffrey was happy taking me everywhere with him, within the States. Merely at home I distanced myself from my Family altogether and with Jeffrey renting me an apartment in Royal Palm Beach as well as a plush furnished apartment in N.Y.C, there was hardly a need to see them. I just couldn't face everyone thinking they all knew what I was really doing travelling around with a man old enough to be my grandfather who supposedly only wanted me for massages. Much further convincing myself of the lies I told myself, I took a liking to the Xanax, it felt like it was all a dream at times, even meeting up with old contacts from school years who experimented with drugs. I was flying around the country, seeing so many places in America I had only heard about in Movies and making more money than anyone my age and loving it. My friends didn't believe the lies I told them about only being a massage therapist, some of them even asking if they can meet Jeffrey too. At this point in my life my heart went missing for a while and I stooped so low, I was even bringing my friends, I just saw them as easy commission. When I wasn't playing servant to my master, I was partying hard, eventually using ecstasy pills, acid, and marijuana to disillusion the times I would've had away from Jeffrey to think about what I was actually doing with my life. I realized something one day while I was alone, although I had Jeffrey to attend to sexually, it was not gratifying. I needed someone to come home to, someone I could call my boyfriend and that showed me emotion not just a job to get done.

Chapter 7

A knock came to my apartment door one lazy afternoon while we were in Palm Beach. I looked through the peephole and didn't recognize the once familiar face. I asked from behind the closed door "Who is it"? The voice of the reply was one I wasn't anticipating to ever hear again. It was my Junior-High crush and childhood friend, T.J. The last time I saw him I was a runaway and he had let me stay at his house for a few days, telling his parents nothing, he kept me hidden away in his room. At nightfall he said to knock on his window and I could jump through and stay the night. Until I was picked up by authorities during school hours and questioned why I wasn't in school they did some resourcing finding out I was a runaway, then delivered me back to my angry parents.

"Oh My God- You finally answer your door girl", and in a whirlwind, T.J stormed back into my life. Even moving into my apartment, secretly, within two weeks of his arrival. He had changed so much from the last time I had seen him. He used to be this hard looking rocker type, now he was cleaned up wearing preppy clothes and shooting out Tupac Lyrics. He had the same old big brown eyes though, and when he told me he had heard I was back in town but he was unable to ever get ahold of me he just kept knocking at my door every so often, I was sold. How sweet I thought, he must care about me if he was so intent on approaching me, not even thinking he would've spoken to the girls from our junior-high circle and they would've mentioned him I was back in town, what I was doing and where to find me. We were a drug-induced romance, which budded from fake emotions the affects made us feel. He got what he wanted, a free ride and not having to work, and I got what I deserved, a man who could let me go away with this multi-billionaire I regarded as my second boyfriend.

I didn't want to alarm Jeffrey in me having a boyfriend so I kept it quiet, until during a massage I was giving to him one afternoon. We were having a conversation about some of my friends, the party girls I had brought in to meet him. Jeffrey started asking questions about the different types of drugs they used hearing them speak about it in his presence. " I thought a person on drugs would be all strung out and looking like hell, but the girls you know look great" he stated face down during the massage.

That's when I told him I had been dabbling in ecstasy lately too, and I thought it was the most amazing feeling one could even fathom. I tried to describe the euphoric feelings it gave me and even joked with him about wanting to pet anything furry that was around and then there was the constant need to flick my tongue-ring around my mouth. It was great having such an open conversation about things Jeffrey had never experienced before and he seemed okay with everything I was telling him as we were having a good laugh together, so I thought I could push it a bit further and tell him the truth about T.J, since it was bound to come out sooner than later I'd rather not the latter, when it would look even worse that I kept the truth from him for so long.

"Well why were opening up about things together", I continued by saying "I had met someone from my past and we have been hanging out a lot lately. When I haven't been travelling with you I have been with him and I was wondering if you minded if I started to see this guy." He started to laugh out loud, "Are you serious? Of course not, no one in this world is monogamous, why would I expect you to be?" I was smitten with relief, but a little bit dis-heartened when I heard him speak that way and I wondered to myself if he'd had his own personal encounter with heartache.

Of course the evening concluded in the same way it always had, the only reason I was really even there in the first place. Upon his request I straddled him on top of the table and let him explode with pleasure inside of me. Thinking the entire time about T.J, I felt so terrible but I quickly had to wipe the thoughts of guilt from my mind not to give Jeffrey the wrong impression. So I had myself busy with two men in my life, but that's not what I really wanted for myself. I wanted an occupation that would eventually set me free from depending on a man as my source of survival.

I asked Jeffrey before I left for the evening, when my real training was going to begin and he liked my assertiveness. I thought it meant to him that I was taking my job with him seriously, but it was all part of his master plan to keep me by his side. Within a couple of weeks of my persistence, Jeffrey introduced me to a couple of real working massage therapists, not only with credentials but with their own clientele too. I was in awe of their teachings, it all made so much sense about the body and what they were saying. I felt like I had picked myself up out of the lurches and had a direction again.

I was in the middle of another training session, with Jeffrey the recipient as usual, being it was rare for Ghislane to ask for a massage unless of course it was for Jeffrey's own pleasure to watch the punch line of the session, when I was shocked to hear Jeffrey ask one of the therapists to now remove her shirt. He had no shame I thought. Even though she was above his usual age criteria, she was still a pretty woman in her early 30's with curly blonde hair and had an athletic body for a mother of two children. She didn't hesitate in his request. It looked like something out of a role-playing porn scene with the therapist removing

her white uniform to reveal her beautiful nude body and a much darker side to her personality.

I couldn't believe it at first it was such a state of shock and I began to question t myself if this was normal in the massage profession to expect this kind of clientele to request such degrading tasks even though they were professionals. At the end of the session she was paid $300 dollars an additional hundred for helping to train me as well, and I was paid my usual $200 dollars then we were both invited by Jeffrey to join him out by the pool for a cool dip. With Jeffrey making a few phone calls while her and I undressed again for a swim, I wanted to ask her a few personal questions about what she's come to learn about the Massage Therapy game, but I never got the chance as we were joined by Ghislane moments later. She was asking how my training was going and booked the therapist in for herself in the following morning. Where she was invited back to do another training session with me. It didn't take me long to figure out why.

I was at my apartment when I received a phone call from Jeffrey, I thought it was the usual call to come over to his house, but he surprised me. Instead I would be going to the exclusive hotel in Palm Beach tonight, The Breaker's, where I would be meeting my first ever clients. Only told their first names I was given some instructions and the address where to meet Glen and Eva. They were a married couple with one on the way. I was quite concerned when I heard she was pregnant, being I really didn't know the body that well and didn't want to inflict any wrong doing on the unborn baby but Jeffrey insisted I take this job. Just massage her gently where she wants to be rubbed and to save all of my energy for Glen's massage, since it was going to be a four-hour job. In an emphasized tone of voice I was being coached by Jeffrey to treat Glen with exactly whatever he wanted, just like I do for Jeffrey himself. It was my last bit of preparation before he sent me out to his friends and my first taste of responsibility in upholding his reputation.

At around seven pm I took a taxi to the address I was given and found them on the residential side of the giant hotel's extensive property. When I arrived in their apartment it was a far cry from the lavish place I was expecting, still really nice but had a cozier family feel to it. It was just beginning to get dark when Eva and I went into the Master Bedroom and she undressed to reveal the first naked pregnant body I had ever seen. It was fascinating to see her in the later stages of maternity, and strangely enough it was a miraculous and wondrous sight. She was a former model and one of Jeffrey's many entourages from his past that had gotten to old for his taste and was married off to a wealthy colleague of his.

Lying down on the bed I adjusted the pillows to try and make her more comfortable and I began to massage her as Jeffrey had instructed me to, softly and slowly. So at ease with her nude body she even asked me to massage her swelling breasts, in a non- sexual way. Not knowing any other way but that way, I was trying to oblige in her request doing the very best I could to relieve her but couldn't help but giggle to myself at the very sight of this. She said she was very happy at the end of the massage and rolled over to go to sleep, asking me to turn out the light at the end of it. I closed the door gently as if not to disturb her, and went to find my other client.

The apartment's lights had been turned out for the sleeping children and I found Glen awaiting for me in the lounge room where I had to call out "Excuse me?" as I couldn't see him in the dark. There was a throw rug on the ground that he had already placed out as he began to strip down in preparation of the massage. Lying frontwards facing me with his exposed and ever growing manhood, I asked him to roll over to begin the massage. He complied with a cheeky smile and from his eagerness to show he was not shy indeed, I already knew where this was going to end up.

I found it much more strenuous to massage on the floor but I wouldn't let that hold me back I wanted to have a career and this being my first ever clients, I didn't want them to disapprove. Nearly four hours after I had gotten there I was still hard at work. Mentally preparing for the end of the session he let me know when he was ready to begin the other side to my job and just like Jeffrey did the first time, he requested me to take off my clothes starting with my shirt. When I complied, the requests kept coming in and before I could change my mind and run away, I was having intercourse with this man that was so comfortable doing all of this while his pregnant wife and children slept in the room beside us. When he had climaxed, we both got up and dressed and he paid me a large tip even though Jeffrey would be the one to actually pay me for my time spent there. Just like it had all started, it had also ended so quickly and now that was that. I had to accept what my duties were and now I could go back to Jeffrey who would be further pleased in my demonstrations to keep him happy.

I was called the next morning to come over to Jeffrey's mansion that afternoon for lunch, a swim and of course a massage session. Knowing all too well they'd be expecting the gory details of last nights events with my new clientele. I came there at 1pm as requested and sat down for a light lunch and a swim. Jeffrey was mostly conducting business from his offside pool office, but he came to ask me if everything went well the night before. I told him I did everything asked of me and I am quite confident both my client's were more than pleased with me. He gave me a quick grin, before he headed back to the office, throwing a purple grape down his throat as he walked away.

Lying out on one of the pool decks blue and white striped lounge beds I was waiting for Jeffrey to finish his business so I could give him his massage. He never took too long with his work, unless there was something wrong and then we would all have to wear his mood but today he seemed fine though, when we went up the stairs he told me we would be leaving for his ranch in Santa Fe', New Mexico in the morning and I'd need to be packed and ready tonight. They loved leaving in the spur of the moment, Jeffrey once said he checks with his pilot Larry on the best weather before he heads to a different destination. I enjoyed spending time at his ranch being it was my favorite of all of his residences. He had a lavish Mediterranean looking castle on top of a hill that over looked his extensive 7,500 acres of property. It has an indoor pool, gym, and all the trimmings of extravagance I could only imagine. I had a great time on the quad bikes, Sarah and I often got scolded for tipping one over going to fast or trying to go up a steep hill, but we knew those weren't the things he cared about, so it wouldn't matter. My favorite of it all was his little town with it's own fire station and truck, stables full of horses, and little cottages where the housekeepers and ranch hands lived.

On my own time I would take one of the quad bikes down to the stables and saddle up on one of his beautiful horses and go for a ride in the open terrain. It was coming up to the end of a very cold winter and it still had the snow covered mountaintops and brisk air that I loved to take in during my many trail rides. I have been an experienced horse rider since my childhood, and could honestly pinpoint some of the best memories of my life being on the back of a horse. I acclaimed with thrill in my voice "Great, I'll get packed as soon as I get back to my apartment" he threw in "Pack for a few weeks, as we will also be making a pit stop to L.A for some business afterwards and then to N.Y.C." I was used to these round trips with him, it was great as I was saving loads of cash and about to buy myself my first car.

Jeffrey, Ghislane, Emmy and I all left the following morning, as planned. Arriving in only a few hours at his awe-inspiring Santa Fe Palace was always a delight. Still frisk in the air, my petite frame looked even smaller in these gigantic overcoats. Nonetheless I was looking forward to spending time out in the fresh clean air and open land. After a few days of leisurely spending our time on the ranch, we went to the Indian markets in Albuquerque for a bit of shopping and sight seeing. Jeffrey wasn't the most off road kind of guy, so when we went sight seeing it was more like museums, boutique shopping, and local art galleries. Still a splendid trip though. With me picking up a few nifty collectables to bring back for my family and knowing how much my mom loves Indian apparel, I thought it would put me back in her good books for awhile, I hoped at least. There was some lengthy time to put a little water under the bridge between my folks and I. With my life heading in a different direction I didn't see any use in holding on to so much hate especially that I didn't even have to see them that much.

We got back to "Zorro Ranch", the name Jeffrey chose to call the massive land he bought to build his fortress on, and Jeffrey told me that he was looking forward to one of my famous relaxing massages and with that notion he gave my bags of shopping to one of the many housemaids who greeted us at the front door and asked her to bring my bags to the exquisite room I was staying in. We headed straight downstairs just past the massage room and gym there is an indoor heated pool, shower and spa. First Jeffrey wanted to warm up in the spa underneath a decorated ceiling of clouds and blue skies. Starting the massage in the spa I rubbed his feet while he reclined into the spa's jets. We spoke of the museum and some of the knick-knacks I had bought and I thanked him for the turquoise earrings and necklace he had got for me as a gift, joking about not ever knowing what to get for him, being that he was richest man I'd ever known. By no far means did we ever have any kind of a mutual respectful bond between us, but there was a significant softer side he began to share with me that was different from how he treated his other girls. Maybe it was my feet that filled the shoes for that time being, or the fact my novelty hadn't worn off yet, but what ever it was I was getting confused from the double-sided life I was leading.

He got up from the spa tub shortly thereafter and asked me to come wash him in the shower. It was nothing unordinary to me, I was used to his need to be nurtured and pampered. I performed his request with a cheerful mannerism, letting him think I was taking care of him out of my sheer sweetness. I got the towels ready for him to get out of the shower and towel dried him, patting his skin instead of rubbing as previously instructed. "You know you have a very maternal instinct, you'll make a fine mother someday", he would constantly acclaim at my gentleness. "I hope so" I replied, I would love to have my own babies one day, but not any time soon". Laughing at the very thought of that.

We walked up the steps and through the French doors into the gym's adjoining massage room. It was smaller room than in his other houses, placing the emphasis on the large massage bed in the center. I grabbed another clean towel to keep him warm while I prepared the music, lights, and oils. He liked me to use mostly lavender or other aromatherapy scents, which reminded me of woodlands in the spring. Always enjoying the beginning of the massage, I put my heart and soul into training in my profession. I could just close my eyes I would see only with my hands the areas that needed the most work, and even though I wasn't a professional yet, Jeffrey could feel and told me there wasn't many that could please him during a massage being untrained. I'm sure now it was just something he'd say nice to all the girls, but in the time I had known him I could honestly say it wasn't like him to compliment girls in any other way than regards to a sexual performance or their looks. I was flattered at his praise and when the massage was over, so were the sentiments. I was back to being used for my body and what I could do with it.

With him satisfied and off for a nap, I could go do what ever I wanted, like usually I would go down to the stables or something adventurous, but today I was in a melancholy mood, just wanting to relax and unwind myself in a giant tub in my bathroom. I got out some of the oils I used on Jeffrey putting them in the steaming water and popped two of my Xanax pills, forgetting about my troubles and focusing on the quiet moment at hand, just wanting to soak up the peacefulness of it. Nearly slipping away to sleep in the tub, I was startled when I got the call on the intercom to come down for dinner.

Everybody seemed in good spirits at dinner, which helped to lift mine. We all ate our meals and went into the movie room to watch a newly released movie. It was a ritualistic scenario, most nights that everyone was at ease we would all sit in one of his various located movie rooms and hang out together. Just as he always would Jeffrey asked Emmy and me to both grab a foot during the movie that night and just keep massaging through the film. We were always on call for duty, no matter where we were or what ever time it was. He would just plop a foot up or pass over his hand at any given time and require a massage, even if the film went on for over two hours, I would still be required to sit on the floor rubbing his feet or hands, and even his scalp at times. After the credits had rolled Ghislane got up to close the door to the room and I knew she had received the signals herself and would proceed to manipulate, violate, and use us to satisfy Jeffrey's urges once more before he went to bed.

The blue illumination from the empty T.V screen was glaring in the tenebrous room as we watched her undress in a light that relied on the reflection of the moon through the windows peek to show it's proceeding display. She walked back to the sofa where I was sitting at Jeffrey's feet still rubbing away and uncovered her shirt displaying ample bosoms for his appeal. Approaching me like a lioness hunting her prey she stood me up and led me to the other couch across from Jeffrey and situated herself on top of me, sliding her fingers through my dress to unbutton my attire, revealing my girlish figure and two small peaks. Pushing my head into her breasts I was being fondled by Emmy at the same time, which took her cue when she saw Ghislane look in my direction. From an occasional glance upwards, I could see that Jeffrey was up to his methodical foreplay stroking his manhood while watching the build up to his main event.

They both took turns making me moan from their touches and when

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Ghislane was ready too she would insinuate we do the same to her. She urged me downwards, until my head was between her opened legs and giving into her wanton indulgence. Twenty minutes passed before Jeffrey exerted his last energies for the night, the only advantage of being with an old man was they could never last long.

Departing to our own separate quarters for the night, I called T.J for condolence. It was so important for me to feel like I had someone out there who saw me as more than a pretty girl with vulnerabilities. I needed to maintain some sort of a connection to my youthful side. But it would be to no avail as I was getting used to being badly disappointed by all the men in my life.

Chapter 8

The phone nearly rang out and as I was about to hang up the receiver when he finally picked up. On the other end of the phone I could hardly hear T.J above the background noises. When I asked where he was he told me "At our place baby", meaning the apartment Jeffrey had rented for me to be staying in alone. He already sounded off his chops elongating his words and slurring his speech. There was music pumping and people shouting behind him and every one sounded like they were having a great time. I was so sick of his friends coming over using my house as a place to party and then trashing it so bad I would even have to sometimes throw my furniture out. I blew up at him over the phone and threatened to kick him out, back to his parent's house, so much for my relaxing evening I thought to myself venturing on to tell him "You leech off me using the money I leave behind for you for drugs and throw these gigantic parties while I'm away." Also mentioning the disastrous messes I would come home too. "I am so close to ending it with you", I would openly threaten, but he knew better than I did, that I just couldn't bring myself to do so, needing some attachment to my youth through all of this. "Don't worry baby" he would say attempting to soothe me with his false words going on to tell me how much he was missing me and how he was always thinking about me when I was away which was like all the time.

I would soon be buttered up and soft for serve. This was my penalty for choosing a guy that accepted my lifestyle with my "Other-Man" as I had so eloquently put it to him once as not only acceptable but deemed it "Cool". The conversation ended with an easy good-bye and no "I-Love-You's" or anything sweet. We weren't those kinds of partners yet, so much time spent away from each other and the lifestyles we both led, I couldn't expect much more from him than what we already had.

Jeffrey and I left two days later, heading off to Carmel in California for a business trip of his, leaving Ghislane and Emmy to catch a commercial flight back to N.Y.C, where we would meet up with them later. When we arrived at the hotel we were given badges for the meeting tomorrow and settled into our rooms. We got adjoining rooms, keeping the doors open at all times, but sleeping in different beds. He liked sleeping alone, even after a late night session I would always go back to my own room. I think that's why he liked me so much I never put pressure on him to become intimately more than what we were already, never giving him the impression I wanted more than what we had. It seemed to keep him happy just the way we were together. I hung out with Jeffrey that night, going to a restaurant for dinner and afterwards watching a movie back at the hotel.

The next morning we went for an early morning breakfast before the conference and Jeffrey gave me some money to go shopping instead of attending the all day meeting with him. I was more than obliged to accept his request, and wished him a good day before planning to meet back in the room around six pm. He gave me five hundred dollars. He said it was just enough to go have fun for the day and a girl of my means could find plenty to do with that kind of money. I walked around the many boutiques that lined the streets of the picturesque cozy town, and picked up some bits of clothing here and there and even met a girl who was passing through on a road trip. She was somewhere in her late teens with golden sunshine tresses, olive skin and blue eyes. Her name escapes me, as it was so unexpected, I think it was Tina or something like that but she was your typical California carefree chic, offering me a few tokes of her jay as we ducked down a side street together. I was so happy I had met this girl, as she was fun spirited and charismatic a relief from the social expectations I had come to know lately, but always being "on-call" as I had been trained up to be, I ended up inviting her back to meet Jeffrey at our hotel later on as a surprise for him. Maybe she was just a bit too carefree for Jeffrey's taste but anyhow she was pretty enough to let him be the judge of that matter.

Over the next hour of hanging out together I found out that she was on a road trip with her best friend who was still sleeping off the hard night of partying from the night before. She was originally from the southern states as she had a bit of draw still left in her accent, and she had recently left her boyfriend because he was leaving for a college too far away not believing in long distance relationships. Then it was my turn to dish out my contribution to the conversation of getting to know each other better. I always got anxiety before I would tell a girl what I did for work and romance (as such), morally I was ashamed of who I was especially with a girl having led somewhat of a normal life. Next, as always, I expected to be probed with so many more questions and having to make Jeffrey sound ideal and hot for the taste of a young girl and knew I would be point blank lying, so I told her some of the truth which was that he was really rich and paid good money for a massage and useful to have around as a contact. I told her he'd give her two hundred dollars for a two-hour massage with me leading the way and warning her he was known to be frisky during the session. Unexpectedly she said she could use the money and then came the part that I hated the most, but had to do so they wouldn't be as shocked as I was the first time I had met him. "He does like us to be nude though and sometimes asks for more than just the massage itself". All I could do was wait for a response after a shocking sentence like that, and depending on the girl, most were sadly taken back by the money. Her carefree attitude seemed to disillusion for a moment when she gave it some thought and asked me "He's not like, fat and ugly, is he"? " " No…no…not at all" I replied, "He's got more of a Richard Gere appeal to him". Trying to make him sound a little more measurable than just a rich old man that likes to be with girls younger than half his age. "Well then, what time shall we meet tonight"? She asked next. Great, I thought, Jeffrey would be most pleased with my find. "Knock on my room quietly, you're going to be a surprise. Be there at around half past seven tonight and I will introduce you to Jeffrey". She threw the butt of the second jay we shared in the bushes and we strolled into a homemade fudge boutique to get some relief for the munchies we now had.

When I got back to the hotel at around a quarter to six o'clock pm as requested I'd be, nobody was back yet, so I took the time to set up the oils and bath in my room for his massage tonight. I thought I would plan it so the girl would be cleaning off, as Jeffrey liked before he had sexual contact with a new girl and he could walk in and be surprised to find a strange beautiful girl in my room who wanted to massage him. Jeffrey walked through the door not long after I was done prepping for the night ahead, looking like he had a rough day at the office, which was very rare for him. He sat down on the bed and I asked him how his day was. He didn't want to talk much about it, saying it was boring and long, rather asking what I got up to for the day. Being coy about having a jay and his unexpected surprise to come, I told him it was a great day of shopping and sight seeing and I even brought him back some local made fudge from the shop that had fulfilled my chocolate cravings only hours ago.

Telling him of the places I ventured into I mentioned to him "We'd have to hit the fisherman's wharf tomorrow. I saw some locals walking around with breadbaskets filled with creamy clam chowder and it smelled absolutely scrumptious." He said if the weather were nice we'd check it out tomorrow before we left for L.A. He wanted to take off his jeans and

collared shirt and put on his normal attire of sweatpants and a sweatshirt. Ushering him out the door for dinner when he was more relaxed I was lucky when he said he was starving and quickly got dressed. We just found a quite spot to eat that was next to the wharf and got back to the hotel just in time for our surprise guest. He wanted to go have a shower and settle down for a massage, so I told him I'd join him in a minute, I just had to make a phone call real quick which he thought was odd and asked me if everything was alright, I reinstated that I'd just be a minute, trying not to let on about anything. The knock came quietly on my room's door just on time, as we had planned and I told her my idea to surprise him. I let her into the bathroom where she orchestrated my plan perfectly. Jeffrey finished his shower without me and when he called out for me I told him that I needed him to have a look at something in my room real quick. Not giving in to what it was that he would be looking at, he came into the room where I opened my bathroom door to reveal a beautiful nude girl bathing in a thick amount of soap bubbles in my tub looking at him with an alluring intrigue. His grin went from ear to ear when she stood up and introduced herself letting the bubbles run down her glistening body at an ever-slow pace. It was a proud moment for Jeffrey, I had done well in his eyes, and she was not like the other girls I had brought to him before, degraded from a lifetime of abuse off the streets. This girl was exactly his pro quo looking sweet and innocent as the girl next door. My efforts were to show him I knew that my only responsibility was to keep him happy at all costs. I led her through the massage on Jeffrey and of course afterwards gratifying his perversion with his lustful requests to be fondled and watch us become more than just friends. I didn't feel too bad at the time with his coercion providing many financial rewards making his scheme enticing to a young, impressionable teen not realizing the terrible memories left to come from all of this. Afterwards he paid her the usual two hundred dollars he gave to everyone for their time and took down her name and phone number writing it in his infamous little black book of the contacts he met in every city but only the ones he really liked made it down in his records.

We went out the next afternoon as I had suggested last night and we ate our clam chowder breadbaskets over looking the wharf's bay, watching the seals playfully barking at each other on the rocks nearby. Shortly after we were driven to the private airstrip and took off for Los Angeles. On the plane was an unexpected visitor. Matt Groening the producer of the "The Simpson's" T.V show was catching a ride with us. I was so excited, as I loved watching his show and acted like a star struck fan, asking him everything from his initial idea for creating the show to where he got his characters from. He told me it was all based on his own family make up, but without the crazy father and son scenes of Homers hand around Bart's throat.

I was enjoying our conversation, when Jeffrey insisted that I give Matt a foot massage throughout the duration of the short flight. I never turned down a client but when I saw the shape of his feet, I nearly threw up at the thought of having to touch them. He had yellow crusty toenails that even someone with a chainsaw would've had troubles cutting through and then there was the fluffy balls of leftover pieces of sock wedged between the crevices of his sweaty toes, now that was the real icing on the cake for me, no way could I attempt this I thought. Then I had an idea. I went to the back of the plane and rinsed a wash cloth in warm soapy water and returned for his dreaded foot massage but not before attempting to clean them first.

In return for my services Matt was kind enough to draw me two quick sketches on blank paper from his briefcase of my two favorite characters, Homer and Bart. I asked if he would make them out to my little brother and dad, the true fans of the family not missing an episode during dinner over the past ten years or so. Next to the A-4 size drawing he was able to fit in the quote "To my greatest fan from Matt Groening" and their names next to it. I knew they'd absolutely love it, and it was such a nice gesture his feet were no longer an issue as I laughed it off and even made a joke to the comedian about getting a pedicure before hitting L.A's beaches.

The flight was only short and we arrived in busy L.A within the hour, saying Good-Bye to Matt, who was a pleasure to meet. Jeffrey had a meeting at a production studio for one of the girls he was keeping lured in his grasps, so we were off yet again for more business. We were staying with one of his old girlfriends, Jeffrey's code for "She got to old for my taste, but was still nice enough to keep around". She was a tall blonde with blue eyes, a stereotypical Barbie doll. In her younger years she had been a successful model and now lived on the beaches of Santa Monica with a sweeping view of the oceans landscape as her backyard.

The next morning Jeffrey and I went out to breakfast. He said Sarah Keller, would be joining us with another one of Jeffrey's girls I hadn't met yet, her name was Nadia Bjorlin and she was a Yugoslavian model turned aspiring actress, with the help of Jeffrey, as he so proudly remarked at the table before they arrived shortly thereafter. She was a stunning brunette with olive skin tones and shocking blue eyes. By far one of the most beautiful girls I had ever met before. She and Sarah approached the table, shopping bags in hands already in the early hours of the day. They both pulled out a chair and showed us their new pair of Jimmy Choo's they had bought on their way here this morning, and excitedly asked for Jeffrey's opinion. He loved the doting attention and anyone who could make him feel important. We all went back to Sarah's apartment that Jeffrey rented for her on Malibu Beach. This was the first time Jeffrey came to visit and when we got there you could see why. It was a tiny one-bedroom shack, too small for his likes of accommodation, but she loved it and it was plain to see why, the waves lapped underneath her porch twice a day, what else could anyone want. Before even walking through her door, you could hear the commotion of excitedly screaming females voices coming from inside. There were about five other girls in Sarah's living room and she had invited them so Jeffrey could have a few different girls to choose from. Jeffrey looked at Sarah and smiled, aren't you sweet, as all the girls rushed to introduce themselves, hoping for the opportunities Sarah had offered them to come in the first place.

We all had some coffee and biscuits while the conversation kept getting louder and louder, every girl trying to talk over the next one. Jeffrey could handle only so much of that before getting too annoyed. Instead of choosing one of the other new girls, Jeffrey wanted Sarah to show Nadia and I into her bedroom. He was anticipating the introduction of his two favorite girls together, what mischief he had hoped we would get up to was apparent when he asked where Sarah had kept her play toys and not the fisher price ones. Sarah brought out quite a collection of her personal toys and was giggling on her way out as she shut the door. Suddenly the room behind us went quiet, probably hoping to catch a moan or groans too laugh at and I felt so degraded having everyone knowing exactly what was going on. Knowing my duties well I was baffled this time as there was no ritualistic massage wanted. He immediately instructed us to start kissing and fondling each other with the provided toys straight away seeing his excitement grow watching us try and out do the other one with pleasure, he couldn't keep restraint any longer and started to have intercourse with the both of us, taking his erect penis out of the other to only swap to the other girl, back and forth. This continued for a good fifteen minutes or so while we continued to engage in lesbian acts on each other while the other girl was being subdued by Jeffrey's thrust's of penetration. Nadia was just as dutiful as I was in fulfilling his demented requests, willing to lend her body to Jeffrey and those he sent her too, for the sake of keeping her acting career and putting on a good act at that. She was never competition though. Once I found out where she actually came from I took pity on her for the similar life of servitude we were both accustomed too and not that we ever became good friends but we had reason to relate to each other.

Later on Jeffrey, Nadia and I went to a production studio in L.A, where we had to meet with Nadia's agent as well as the producer of "Day's Of Our Lives". The meeting lasted five minutes, with everyone in consent to the proposal. We flew all the way out there to talk about money, only to be leaving that evening back to N.Y.C. On the way to the airport we stopped at a fifties looking diner and got a cheeseburger and vanilla milkshake, the first and only time I saw Jeffrey eat what I considered to be real food. Seven lanes to drive in and the freeway was still lined bumper to bumper in the heavy rain. The sound of downpour on the rooftop of the taxi and the rhythm of the windshield wipers was making me sleepy. I was looking forward to sleeping through the long flight back. Thank goodness we had a private jet to catch back, the trip would be comfortable and not rushed to get there on time through the daily peak hour traffic. Jeffrey asked me what I thought of Nadia, more of a kiss and tell kind of thing for him, so proud to admit some of his tenacious acts of pedophilia to me that I knew most people would be embarrassed to even think aloud but I said what he wanted to hear when he asked me what I had thought of her on the way back. I replied, "She is attractive, funny, and seems to know what she is doing with you." Laughing at my statement, he then started to tell me the history behind where he got her. Five years ago when she was merely a teenager just turned thirteen. Her father had recently passed away, leaving Nadia's mother in a tremendous amount of debt and living in a third world country, she didn't have the means necessary to raise her own daughter. When Ghislane approached Nadia for the first time at a music school, she seemed like a maternal, caring stepmother. Telling Nadia's mother if she let Nadia go with her, she would se to it personally that Nadia receive the best education and chances in life to make it. In her customs it wasn't odd for a young girl to be married off to bring the family good fortune, so she kissed her baby girl good-bye and sent her off to commence her life of servitude. I sat there speechless listening to Jeffrey brag about his endeavor to get her over here, shocked that he could stoop as low to use a barely teen to oblige his sexual desires. He was laughing and giddy as he replayed the memories of her arrival over in his head, painting me a horrific picture I had no choice but to imitate a smile to face him with.

No pretty girl is safe from the allurement of these villains procuring the youth off of every street in the world. I knew that day more than ever before those morals did not exist for people like this. Jeffrey once told me that every girl he has had sexual relations with has benefited in their career, finances, or an achievement in marriage with a successful colleague of his. Mine was the massage career, ever so often still giving me a lesson from a professional, which kept me quiet for a while longer. I thought I was already knee deep in this world, if I gave up after putting myself through all of this hell it would've all been be for nothing. So I treaded lightly, constantly at a risk of being replaced by another willing participant and playing the eager student he wanted me to be.

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Chapter 9

We met Ghislane and Emmy in N.Y.C, and it wasn't a blissful reunion as I hoped for, wanting a break from all of this I was just looking forward to getting back to Palm Beach, not leaving for a further four more days. I got home late in the evening as Jeffrey invited me out to the movies after we had relaxed at his house for a while after landing.

I put my keys through the door to my apartment and walked in to a quiet house. Not thinking anyone was at home I set my suitcase on the floor and put my cell phone on charge as I always did to be accessible for whenever Jeffrey or Ghislane could call. I went to get a drink out of the fridge when I heard some noises coming from the back of my apartment where my bedroom was. I started back there and slowly turned my doorknob to reveal T.J on top of another girl. When they noticed they weren't alone anymore, T.J got off her with promptness. I recognized the girl from seeing her around at parties, and she was the town lowie, scattering her trail of guys along with her presumable diseases, and I wasn't shy to verbalize that when she tried to open her mouth and calm the heated situation between T.J and I. She didn't like her cards on the table in front of the guy she was screwing around with and got up in a fit of rage to attack me. Still nude with only my new white sheets to cover her body, I threw her out of my house along with T.J. "I have been paying your way for months, only finding out your sleeping with the biggest slut in Royal Palm Beach, at least have some dignity and higher your standards." I didn't really have a leg to stand on since I had started this relationship giving him the knowledge I had a sugar daddy to answer to above him. "You're gone all the time and with that old man, what did you expect me to do"? He was right, I wanted what I couldn't have, but I needed some time to cool down and accept my situation. I loved having T.J around to come home too, and he used to be my best friend in my school days. I convinced myself of the lies I continued to accept.

Days later I was still not speaking with T.J, mentally adjusting to my circumstances, I thought I'd have the day off to relax since I hadn't been called all day. Until about five pm when Ghislane called and said Jeffrey would like a massage in an hour. Grudgingly I got up from relaxing on the couch, got dressed and put my make-up on, meeting Juan downstairs a half an hour later. Jeffrey was already lying on the massage table when I walked in. I started the massage being very quiet from my somber mood, when Jeffrey picked up on it and said "you know it's not good to massage people when you're angry, you could pass on negative energy". I wasn't sure if he was serious or just trying to be nice so I could speak about what was bothering me. Ending up not being able to contain my

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emotion any further I told him what happened with T.J and broke down in tears, a little heart broken from living in such a lie. He turned around from his massage and sincerely paused for a second thinking he was going to console me but instead he laughed at the very prospect of my notion that monogamous relationships ever existed. "Are you serious, he was only doing what every guy in the world does, you can't hold that against him". I replied in a lighthearted gesture "whose side are you on anyways"? His answer stuck with me for many years to come "I'm on your side which is why I'm going to save you a lot of grief with this one tip, Never expect a man to be faithful and you'll never be let down, it's just the way us men are genetically imprinted." The remainder of the massage I had to pretend like I wasn't further saddened by his response, but in fact having to act enlightened. I would never come to him for any other relationship advice, ever again. He told me I'd be fine if I just listened to my mentor. He still loved role-playing the teacher and me the pupil, like the old days before he got rich and only used to be a college professor. I finished the massage and fulfilled my sexual duties before being sent home wanting to collapse in anguish.

T.J was outside my apartment door when I got there, his mom waiting downstairs in her minivan just in case I kicked him out again. He pleaded his guilt and promised that he would never see her again, agreeing with me that she was the town slut and he screwed up big time. I let him back into my apartment and back into my life for that matter but more aware of the world I was being led into believing was of normal conduct accepted by everyone in this sick world. Jeffrey was going back to N.Y.C and told me to have a few days off before his assistant at his office would arrange an E-Ticket on a commercial flight for me to join him later in the week. I had just made loads of money from my previous trip and wanted to relax like any teenager does, so I threw a hotel party that weekend on Singer Island in Rivera Beach, inviting only a small group of friends to begin with.

The hotel room quickly filled up with a flood of teens and the pumping music was blaring. The room had a balcony overlooking the pool and the beach that became the smoker's section. I wasn't a real smoker at that point, preferring to have a puff of a spiffed blunt instead so I made it my rule to go outside trying to prevent holes in the carpet, but it didn't last too long when our forbidden walls came tumbling down. Making so much money that I could supply my wild parties with an assortment of drugs like trips, ecstasy, and coke as well as an abundance of alcohol, that T.J had all the contacts for, made my fellow teens admire me. It definitely gave me a head swell, thinking here I was so young but so grown up already with all of my peers from high school looking up to me. In the wee hours of the morning we were all still going hard with our eyes dilated into little black diamonds. We were all having in depth conversations about life and where we would all end up when this charade was all said done. Nobody got to sleep that night as the room slowly dwindled in numbers as people were finding their way home to recover from the repercussions of drugs wearing down out of their intoxicated system.

When I flew out to N.Y.C to meet Jeffrey the next day, I was still in a horrible state. Not knowing what was wrong with me, thinking it was just a bad come down, I rushed out of the elevator and down the hall to my room, sweating profusely, to make it just in time to the toilet to throw up bile again for the uncountable time since getting off the plane. I was having intense cramps in my stomach and when I was called down to meet Jeffrey in the massage room, I had to decline for the first time. I told the housekeeper that I was feeling very ill after the flight, maybe some off food for lunch and needed to lie down for a while. Nobody came up to check on me for hours or even called. Waking up from my much-needed nap, I pulled back the expensive white sheets to find myself in a pool of my own sweat and blood. I was covered in the red stains that drenched the pants I was wearing. I had no idea what was going on, I could only focus on the dire amount of pain I was in. In between the heaves of throwing up and crying simultaneously I was able to reach the phone and called the housemaid on the intercom. I told her I needed to go to a hospital immediately and slammed the phone down only to fall back to the floor hurdled in a ball. She didn't hesitate in calling Ghislane who ran up to see what was wrong. Ghislane then called Jeffrey who was in his office at the time and told him to hurry up to my level, stressing to him that it was an emergency. Thinking they really cared about me for the first time since I had known them, they came with me to the hospital with me. Now I realize I was only a liability in getting them caught and they needed to get to the doctors before I could say anything incriminating. They were suspecting the worst now and seeing he never wore a condom with me and from our previous conversations they knew I always made T.J wear one, they feared the situation at hand.

When he saw the catastrophic state I was in at that point, it was the housemaid who helped me get up and assisted me down to the car where Jo-Jo was waiting for me. He drove us to either Lennox Hill Hospital or Mount Sinai, I can't remember, as it was so blurry in such a bad condition. Rushed in for immediate testing I was uncontrollably vomiting and in so much agony, I was given an injection to help me to subside the intense pain. A nurse came in to ask who would pay for this and although I insisted my parents insurance still covered me, Jeffrey persisted that he take care of all the medical bills and gave the nurse his information.

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When the pain relief kicked in, everything and everyone dwindled away until I felt like Alice in Wonderland who just swallowed the shrinking tablet and everyone standing around me seemed to move so quick, speak so loud and hover above me. When I awoke from my induced state, I was alone in a different room. Not knowing at all what went on but feeling a little better, I called in the nurse who looked through my charts and checked my vital signs. Then told me the doctor would be in shortly to inform me of the conclusion to my illness.

He was a tall man with dark hair, and a hardened look about him obviously from his job and constantly seeing the worst horror stories man could think of, he just bluntly told me I had miscarried in early stages of pregnancy. I should be fine to go home as soon as my course of intravenous antibiotics was complete. The news sunk in fast and hit a deep nerve. I waited for the doctor to close the curtain before I let out any emotion and cried for my disastrous lifestyle that was dragging me into a world that I wanted to break out of. This reoccurring cycle of believing I needed men like Jeffrey to succeed in my life was draining the last bits of sensitivity left in my heart. I was picked up by Jeffrey himself who took the doctor alone to the side of the busy hallway to have a private conversation about something. Jeffrey wasn't comforting at all, instead he sent me back home to rest for a couple weeks, and I only fell deeper into a depression, using all forms of self-medication to treat my sorrows.

Two weeks later, as if Jeffrey was trying to lighten my spirits, he told me I would be going to his island to meet a new client. He is a Harvard Professor, named Stephen Kosslyn. I would be spending two days with him showing him around the island, dining with him, and treating him to a massage whenever he wanted. Without Jeffrey even verbalizing the need to have sex with him, he told me to keep him happy like I had my first client. I packed my suitcase with island apparel, and kissed T.J good-bye, who had at least offered me a warm embrace upon the news of my miscarriage but none other than that knowing it wasn't his.

Stephen was a quirky little man with white hair and a mad scientist look about him. We arrived separately and I greeted him when one of the housekeepers picked him up from the airport and arrived by boat, instead of helicopter as Jeffrey and Ghislane often arrive on. We made our acquaintances and he looked as if he was tripping over himself with words, obviously delighted with his company and location for the weekend. I showed him around as Jeffrey had asked and took him on an adventurous quad bike ride around the small curvy paths, leading the way and letting loose my hair, doing something that gave me a natural high instead of the prescription one. The sights alone were breathtaking from the mountainous peaks of the untouched parts of the island, we sat at a cliff and just sat there, not saying a word to each other besides to compliment the sights mother nature that appealed to us. I didn't feel as if I owed this stranger anything but what was expected of me by Jeffrey and I could be polite, I just couldn't be myself.

We got back to the main villa to see what time dinner would be served so we could have time to unpack and clean up beforehand. We both met at six pm for dinner on the outside veranda. He sat at the head of the table and I sat next to him, politely folding my napkin to put in my lap. The first time Jeffrey and Ghislane had seen me cut meat and eat with a fork and knife they were so appalled, making fun of my unsophisticated habits. Ghislane took the fork and knife in her hands and proceeded to show me how to politely cut my food and eat. Now that my mannerisms had improved they wouldn't have to be worried about my etiquette when someone important was around anyone. We both drank the red wine supplied on the table and it seemed to warm me up on the breezy night. By the time dinner was served and another red wine bottle later, he seemed to get funnier. I made fun of his tousled hair and he poked at me for my skinny legs, calling me a wanna-be- anorexic. When dessert was brought out, he asked if he could receive one of the delightful massages he has been hearing about from Jeffrey. I gulped more red wine down and sweetly complied with his offer, dreading the moment I'd have to see his naked body, let alone touch it. I asked the housekeeper Kathy that had been serving us that night to please have someone set up a massage bed in one of the cabana's. I went to my room to down a few Xanax, telling him I wanted to freshen up after dinner but to meet me in his cabana in twenty minutes or so. I was ready to go as I had said, twenty minutes later, with the effects of the tablets mixed with the red wine, and I would be free not to feel anything. He was still dressed when I got in the cabana, obviously not accustomed to this and a lot shyer than what I had been used to, I told him he'd need to undress and lie face down on the table, putting a towel to cover his bare bottom to prevent him feeling embarrassed during the massage. I gave the massage my earnest as I always had, and quickly got through having intercourse with him. Not wanting to make any foreplay or anything extravagant out of it, I let him think that's as good as it got, and by the smile on his face, I thought I had done enough.

The next day I took him down to the beach for a real massage under a tiki-hut on the waters edge. It was one of Jeffrey's favorite places to have a massage, as he droned out to the sound of the waves and my gentle therapeutic strokes. Afterwards we had lunch back at the main villa and went back down to the beach to swim out to the water trampoline about one hundred meters off the dock. He didn't do any bouncing around or anything like that. It was just a good base point for a rest spot after a long swim. What was really cool about it though, was you could see through the mesh and watch fish swimming underneath.

The rest of the afternoon we spent by the pool reading magazines and eating fruit plates. Eventually he went to his cabana to have a nap later on. That night after dinner and my mixed cocktail of Xanax and red wine, I asked if he'd like another massage before I went to bed. He just wanted to stay up watching movies in Jeffrey's theatre room. As peculiar as that request was to me I didn't argue it, I just hoped I hadn't disappointed him in any way that could make it back to Jeffrey. I showed him how to use the remote and turn off the T.V when he was finished before going to bed. The next morning we were both catching a flight from St. Thomas and we had no time for anything other than breakfast and packing, which saved me from having to be too polite as we said our good-bye's from the terminal in the airport, both hurriedly off in separate directions, thankfully. I arrived back in Palm Beach, only to be told to catch another flight the next day to N.Y.C, where Jeffrey would fix me up the money he owed me for treating his colleague out to an entertaining weekend.

Chapter 10

I was fixed up more than what I had usually made for two days, which was great because that car I had been saving for was finally within my reach. I had been waiting for the freedom a car gives every teenager for a long time, and now that I had over fifteen thousand dollars saved up I could pretty much afford to go buy myself a nice car outright. Looking much better than the last time I saw him Jeffrey acknowledged it. I went to his office where he was waiting for me and he had a guest with him. She was unusual looking to the common stereotype drop dead gorgeous girls Jeffrey had normally introduced me to. Of Asian decent, her name was Rena. Jeffrey had met her at an art gallery where some of her own artwork was on display. She had a bubbly persona about her and I could then understand why Jeffrey liked her so much, she fit into the subservient category that he liked his girls to fall under. It was apparent to me that they had already slept together in the short time span they had met, as there closeness was oddly noticeable and I wondered what it was he was offering to her in exchange for her body. I found out later from Jeffrey that he was buying her artwork, promising her the world as an artist, telling her he'd have her work in the all the museums in N.Y.C and the best art exhibits. Everyone was promised something, and seemed to be bought off in someway or another to be in his company. It was only a matter of time that the truth would come out.

To my own amazement Rena was to be assisting me in Jeffrey's massage this day, not being a total knockout or anything spectacular, looks wise that is, but for some reason he seemed intrigued enough. As we made our way through his spectacular mansion she was in total awe at every corner. Commenting on the present artwork and décor that we passed in every hall, it no longer seemed so grandeur to me anymore but hearing someone else speak about it in such excitement reminded me of the days when all of this seemed so unforeseen.

When we got to the massage room, or "The Dungeon" as I used to put it for it's medieval looking appearance, we firstly out of custom all had a steam shower, where Jeffrey expected me to walk her through a servants duties, telling her to take his other foot and start rubbing in small circles and stroking the arches of his foot rhythmically. Rena took the instructions well and began to massage him too. When we all went to the shower next and she followed in my exact lead washing his body as well. Jeffrey absolutely loved the fact that two teenage girls were dually pampering him. Jeffrey wanted to move to the massage bed and I had to further begin to show her about the body, upon his accord. She mimicked my every move up his legs and buttocks, keeping up with every stroke until he could not contain his arousal any longer and was already requesting us to start kissing each other, the start of the very reason we had even met in the first place.

He blatantly stopped the massage nowhere near being complete and turned over to announce his increased arousal in a physical abundance of grotesqueness. Moving over to the small couch in the corner of the room he made a space for her to lye me down on the massage table as she had commanded him to do in such a domineering tone that he wasn't used to being spoken down to with. From that very moment onwards and from the look on his face he was yearning for her to orchestrate an hour of deliverance upon my meek nature. He started to stroke his erect manhood as he was being tantalized watching her take over every inch of my body in a dominating act of seduction. I was left breathless and soar after my first introduction into the world of S&M.

Rena considered herself a dominatrix, she loved bondage, whipping hitting, and eventually cutting her sex partner with little sharp knives until they subdued to her punishment in agonizing pain. She was absolutely crazy if you were to ask me, and I couldn't help but wonder what got her into this in the first place. All I knew was that Jeffrey was absurdly taking into the appeal of watching us two interact, often with her acting as my mistress who would fondle me with an insurmountable amount of whips and toys. Then she would love to finish off every session by hitting me across my face with a hard blow from the back of her hand and sneering over my curled up body showing Jeffrey her ability to make others surrender to her extreme force. She could be so opposite all of the sudden and be tenderly intimate with Jeffrey stroking his penis lovingly and even speaking in baby talk to him, which he seemed to adore.

He loved us pairing up so much that within months he made Rena an official even renting her an apartment at the same place he had one for me during my extensive trips out to N.Y.C. Sending us out shopping together at all of the underground seedy sex stores downtown we would bring him back thousands of dollars worth of sexy outfits, sex toys and bondage material. His favorite one was a black leather studded collar that lead down the back of my spine to cuff my hands and feet together, offering Rena the most compromising positions to wield her afflictions, one she was excited to pick out for my usage.

She was good at eradicating my softer side though. Helping me forge an unpredictable scenario of me turning the tables on her, making her at my will instead of me always being at her twisted discretion. Jeffrey loved the rivalry between us, both striving to dominate the other one but to me it was just another way of surviving her punishment. All for show I thought she was a madman let loose in a torturesome domain of violent sex and unbearable beatings. I wasn't sure how long I could hold off this charade of S & M, I just didn't want Jeffrey to think I couldn't give him everything that she could, always being replaceable in his company.

She and I could often come across as good friends to his blind eye but it was only a matter of time before the animosity inside of me was going to snap. Doing normal things too made it all half bearable. Having a lot of similar interests we did fun things like go to the theatre to watch "Phantom of the Opera" or visit several historical and art museums together, afterwards treating ourselves for a giant piece of greasy N.Y.C style pizza. Like I said, we really liked each other purely as friends but the dominance in the massage chambers was taking it's toll on our strange friendship. One average trip back to N.Y.C, she surprised Jeffrey with a six foot by six-foot oil painting of her and I lying nude in a ying and yang position facing each other. Although we were soliciting each other with sexual innuendo the picture was still very carefully orchestrated to perfectly portray the darker side of Jeffrey's thrills. It was an amazing piece of work, besides the lewdness of it, but she would've known that's exactly what kind of art Jeffrey liked. He was so astounded by her gift as he had previously asked her to construct a small painting of us together but was not expecting anything of this grand magnitude she had presented him with. He lifted her from the ground and twirled her around before he thanked her profusely and embellished her with his profound gratitude, the only thing Jeffrey had to offer, he handed her a small wad of cash as her payment. It was the most appreciation I had ever seen him show a girl. Obviously moved by her gesture, he got her an exhibit in N.Y.C's "Metropolitan Museum of Art" where she submitted her very own piece. She sculpted an image of my headshot out of clay, shaping it with the strands of my long hair blowing across my face. I was taken aback myself at her creation. She really did have an amazing talent if not for her meaner streak she would've been a great friend. I will never forget Rena, for all of the ups and the downs we endured together.

It wasn't too much longer before I finally had enough of the abuse in the bedroom and I had to tell Jeffrey what I was feeling. She was getting even more violent as time went on, and with her questioning me and Jeffrey why she didn't get brought on long trips with him, she didn't get the fact that she was just a tool for him to use. Jeffrey said he was already thinking about getting rid of her off of his "regular list". He said she was becoming too clingy and he didn't like clinginess or jealousy. I never even got to say good-bye or take the opportunity to keep her as a friend, like a girlfriend to catch up with once and awhile, but that's how it was with Jeffrey, one day you sat under the blanket of his comfortably and the next without any warning you could be discarded like yesterdays news. She would've taken it hard but that's the game we were playing and it was for those who knew what lines not to cross.

I was further surprised the next day when Jeffrey gave me a thousand dollars to go shopping in downtown Manhattan to find a classy dress, on top of being sent to the exclusive beauty salon of celebrity stylist "Frederic Fekkai" for a new look. It was amazing, to be pampered like royalty. I walked out of there feeling like I had replaced a young girl with a young woman, I felt beautiful. He had yet another surprise in store for me. Ghislane called me and told me I need to go to a photo-developing store and ask them for two I.D photos then bring them downtown to Jeffrey's Manhattan office. Weird request I thought. I was more used to posing in full body shots being sexually exposed as a gift for Jeffrey. I did as they asked and took my two photos into the office where Jeffrey's assistant was waiting for my arrival. Still not telling me what the headshots were for, she took them from me and told me to have a seat for a second. A moment later I heard Jeffrey call me into the office. "I like what you've done with your hair, you've gone more blonde, suits your glowing tan". I replied with an appreciative "thank-you" for sending me to such a renowned hairstylist, and shopping money. I showed him my finds for the day, an elegant off the shoulder navy blue dress that had two layers that would swoosh and sway with my every stride. I couldn't wait to wear it on a special occasion, and I wouldn't have to. The pictures I had to bring to him, as he would proceed to tell me, were for my first passport. I was so excited, we were going to France for a close friend of Jeffrey and Ghislane's birthday party, famed super-model Naomi

Campbell. I was so over-joyed with excitement, what girl my age with a background like mine was attending socialite parties and globetrotting the world. It only made it harder for me to see beyond the elusive walls I had put up to protect myself from the appalling truth.

We left in early April first going to London, Paris and then our final destination being St. Tropez in Southern France. If Hallmark had a postcard, St. Tropez would definitely be on the front of it. It was beautiful spring weather and every where you looked women were dressed in bikini tops branded with some kind of designer label embedded into it and the men were following them around like harping dogs in heat. In all of the elegance of the Mediterranean, "La Bastide De St. Tropez" was an impressive landmark. Jeffrey and Ghislane were staying in one of the private cottages, on the park on the grounds, while Emmy and I stayed in separate quarters inside the hotel. The old style cobblestone streets were lined with boutique shops and beauty parlors. It was the hedonistic stomping grounds of the beyond rich and famous.

The next day we went out to lunch at the grand opening of the infamous Nikki Beach Club, where a cheap glass of champagne costs around two hundred dollars and if your not keeping the alcohol consumption flowing like water, you'd be asked to leave to make way for the constant flow of prospectus patrons. That's where I first got to meet Naomi Campbell. She was wearing the typical attire strutting around southern France, a D&G bikini top and a wrap around mini skirt to go over the swimsuits bikini. She was so tall and stunningly beautiful. Her charisma was energetic, funny, and everyone seemed to hang off of her every word and laugh at her every joke. Ghislane and Jeffrey kissed her cheeks and wished her a happy birthday, and then I was introduced and followed in their suit. She was surrounded by a league of assistants, friends and fans, which didn't make it easy for us to all converse but she got enough time in to invite us abroad a yacht of a fellow she was "kind of seeing" at the time for the before party ahead of tonight's event. We went back to the hotel and I gave Jeffrey a massage in his room before we all headed down to the pool to soak in some of the year's first sun's rays.

I loved wearing my new ball gown and feeling like a princess. It was absolutely sensational and made me feel as if I floated in the dress. I swept up my long hair in a twisted clip, only letting down a few curly strands and layered on the mascara. Receiving many compliments throughout the evening when we eventually left the Yacht to make our appearance at the main birthday bash, I couldn't help but feel excitement for the party to come it was the first celebrity birthday bash I had ever been to. Being introduced to model after model and the rich men that followed them around became dizzying. Jeffrey sat back and watched as I buoyantly worked the dance floor, coming back to the table where he was, only to grab another glass of champagne every now and then. Every so often he'd introduce to me to someone new, pulling me aside to show off his eager young masseuse to his fellow pedo's. These people had so much money pouring out of them. I don't know why he even thought they'd care in the first place. It made me feel good though. At least I knew I made him proud to have me in his company.

Being surrounded by so many of Jeffrey's colleagues and his likeminded people that were considered the most sophisticated and the highly esteemed of today's world nearly made the way I was living lately more fathomable, at least to myself. I thought if everyone looks up to these people and they are all accepting of it, it must be just the way the world turns. I danced with a young prince that night and with all of the help from the bubbly champagne I couldn't remember his name for the life of me. On one of my trips back to the table for another glass, Jeffrey leaned over to quietly whisper in my ear that it was a prince that I had actually been dancing with and I didn't phase me in the least way. I went back to the dance floor and continued to let my hair down. It was a fun bash, the entire crowd sang "Happy Birthday" to Naomi and by the time we got back in the car to retreat for the night, I was giddy from the drinking and dancing all evening. We had a guest in the car, and apparently we had already been introduced, but I couldn't even remember his name in the first five minutes of our meeting again. He was the hotel owner of some large chain in America called "Hilton". Staying at one of the cottages near Jeffrey, he saw it quaint to loan me out for a night's massage to ruin an "almost" perfect evening. Jeffrey told me to come back to his room after I was finished with Rick, thankfully he reminded me of his name but also odd I thought, being so late I would've never imagined Jeffrey could stay up this late but I never made a fuss out of his requests. I gave him affirmation of my understood instructions and headed off with this stranger into the darkness.

I dimmed the bright lights in his bedroom to a softer tone as if it might aid the vision of this short, balding man with straggling remnants of curly brown hair left to show for the remaining bits of youth left in him. I had to ask him to undress and lay on top of the towel that I had picked up from the neatly folded pile at the end of his bed and spread it over the duvet. I didn't want to waste a second in his place, getting right to the very reason I was even there. Turning around while he was getting undressed, being our first time together, I wanted to give him the impression I was actually a therapist and not a finale to the end of the nights entertainment. Not exactly what he had in mind though, given that my impression was already made for me when Jeffrey arranged for our meeting in the first place. His chuckle to my response was condescending as he came up behind me and unzipped my dress which floated to the bottom of the floor as he was saying "You can't really expect to give a massage wearing this, here sweetie, I'll help you out of it." He just wanted to see the hidden bounty my clothes were hindering his eyes from seeing. I just went about my way trying to get his hands off of me and to get him to lie down for a massage. Making quaint conversation with him was pointless as I was trying to send his thoughts elsewhere other than the apparent perverted schemes replaying in his mind from the heavy breathing he was making and the looks he was giving to me. I was using all of the tricks in the "turn-off" book even asking him about his wife and kids.

Unquestionably he was in seventh heaven turning every one of my distractions into another flattering compliment. He was saying things like "I love what you do you to me, I have never felt like this before, come stay with me and I will pay you double, no, triple whatever Jeffrey pays you!" Knowing he was just a drunk idiot, I wasn't being lured in by any of his offers of money or a privileged lifestyle, I knew these cages all too well and I was better off sticking with the one that I was at least accustomed to already. Holding back any composure now, he was going extremely wild ravishing at my body trying to tear off my panties like a hungered wild animal. After all of the champagne I had drunk that night it gave me the nerve that I needed to know exactly how to handle perverts like this one, who had been no different from every other shmuck in my life, and I quickly shut him up with a blowjob lasting no longer than two terrible minutes. It had only been shy of a half an hour before I was already getting quickly get dressed and hurrying out his cottage door.

When I got to Jeffrey's cottage I rushed through the door and told Jeffrey and Ghislane, who were sitting front of the fireplace reading a books, that I never ever wanted to see that guy ever again. When they asked me what was the matter, I told them of every thing that had happened that night even how he offered me to come work for him getting paid triple. I established a lot of trust with Jeffrey that night. He asked me why I didn't accept the offer and I responded with " Who would look after you, if I were gone?" Like a caring grand father would do, he pulled me into his chest for a hug and told me that it meant a lot to him. It was so late and I was so tired but I still had to give Jeffrey his massage that night. He asked me to just rub his feet as he fell asleep, and thankfully he was out like a light in no time. The next morning I took two headache tablets and a ginger ale instead of a coffee. Trying to contain my hangover as best as possible behind a pair of sunnies it was mid afternoon by the time I had felt like myself again. We spent the day Yacht hopping, soaking in the sunny weather while Jeffrey and Ghislane caught up with old acquaintances, Emmy and I were just accessories to look good on the arms of them. The next day we wrapped up the tail end of

our trip and commenced our flight back into the U.S. I was paid a generous amount and set off to go car shopping as soon as I got back to Florida. Through a private seller, I was able to pay out right for my car. I got a Dodge Dakota in cherry red, and immediately had an impressive sound system put in. She was my first pride and joy and taste of freedom. I would love to drive her down to Lakeworth Beach to sit in my car and watch the waves while I listened to my stereo blare music and puffed on a jay. Letting the rest of the world pass by while I sat back and watched them walk past wondering to myself what their story was about.

I turned seventeen that summer and had accumulated a string of exotic destinations that I had travelled in such a short time. I was given more make-up and a pair of diamond earrings from Jeffrey. Ghislane only wished me a happy day, wondering at times if she felt threatened by Jeffrey's and my closeness. We went to the island after we left N.Y.C and I asked If Sarah would be meeting us, mentioning it had been a while since we had last seen her. He said he had some bad news about her. Expecting the worse, thinking she had gotten hurt or something, I was astounded when Jeffrey told me that she had been sent to his island with one of his friends for a couple days and when the housekeepers were cleaning her room and they found a stash of cocaine left out carelessly in the bathroom.

He said he had no choice but to let her go. Addicts with no respect for themselves or his wishes had no leeway in Jeffrey's book. He didn't mind that I dabbled in drugs once in a while as long as I never brought them along with us on any trips, except for my Xanax, which he didn't mind because it was pharmaceutical and most of all wouldn't cause him trouble being a legal narcotic. Sarah took it too far when she crossed international borders with an illegal drug, risking her welfare and almost costing Jeffrey public attention. She lost her apartment and contacts in the acting world, only hearing from acquaintances once in a while that she was sinking deeper and deeper into the black hole of addiction. It was sad to find out, as I always did like her.

At the island, Ghislane had just recently obtained her helicopter pilot's license and wanted to get some practice airtime and flew Jeffrey and I to St. John where we picked up Alexandria Cousteau, the grand daughter to the inventor of the scuba tank and underwater explorer Jack Cousteau. Ghislane was out to set us affright in the air, but it was all talk, she was actually an impressive pilot. Still a daredevil though, she got her kicks out of hearing us fret on the earmuffs intercom's. Jeffrey made it clear that Alexandria was a guest when I was told to adhere to her if she wanted a massage, which I obliged her with several times during our first meeting. It was Jeffrey who instigated that her and I reenact as lovers in lesbian acts of foreplay and penetration. I couldn't imagine a girl with such high prospects lowering herself to something of Jeffrey's standards, but I later found out through Jeffrey that he had donated money to her continuous exploration into marine life and habitats. She had followed in her family's footsteps, all of them involved in Marine Biology in some way or another. We actually got along really well, she was a real decent girl, and loved talking about her passion, everything underneath the waters surface.

When I wasn't busy giving massages to everyone around, her and I would hang out together. Often we go swimming in the crystal clear pool of ocean that the Caribbean had to offer. Once we swam out so far not paying attention to our location and were carried out to sea by the current. We took turns on the backs of each other, taking breaks against the strong ocean tide. It was almost a possibility that we nearly drowned out there, if it weren't for some guys on a boat out fishing for the day when they caught us in their view. They picked us up and brought us back to the island where we were reprimanded by a worried Jeffrey and Ghislane to first of all let someone know where we are going at all times, and never to lose sight of the shore while out for a swim. After that learning experience I took their heed and proceeded with caution. I had a newfound respect for the ocean and it's mysteries.

Having such a lover of the water as a guest, made Jeffrey want to explore parts of his Caribbean he had never seen before. The next morning we were met by a scuba instructor in St. James and given a few lessons in how to use the gear and more tips like how to descend slowly to the ocean floor as not to cause blood clots as well as visual hand signals to communicate underwater. It was so exhilarating beneath the waters surface. No voices to listen too, only the enchanting sights to take in. We explored the surrounding reef and found a large squid, many of sea urchins, and the magnificent colored coral that housed a many of the rich variety of the local species of fish. It was such a great sight to take in. Holding a permanent mental picture of those adventures to carry in my head for all times.

We all had such a great time that Jeffrey hired the same scuba instructor to come out the next day to scuba dive the safer parts around his island. We got bored quickly with not much to see but seaweed and a fish here and there. It didn't take long before Ghislane decided for us all to explore other numerous locations by boat, Jeffrey needed a bit of convincing at first and the instructor was quick to assure him that he knew his way well around these waters, of course he would say that, he was getting paid a hell of a lot to do this in the first place, why not extend it a few more hours?

The clear water glistened and the tropical array of marine life was on display as we wanted to stop at so many places but you could see as beautiful as it was it could be as equally dangerous. It took so long as we had to veer away from so many desirable spots. Finally we found a good place that the scuba instructor thought was safe. He buddied us up into pairs and we jumped off the back of the boat into the crystal aqua blue waters beginning our descent slowly into the darker regions of the oceans floor. We were situated on open water with a cavern of reefs to venture in and around down below. It seemed to be quite a choice to scuba in, one that our guide said he wasn't familiar with but to alleviate his bored clientele deemed safe to swim around.

It was Jeffrey and the Guide together, Ghislane and Emmy, and I was paired up with Alexandria. Miles, the houseman, came with us and stayed on the boat just in case something went wrong and lucky he did. We were all too far under the water to hear his alarming screams of distress when shadow's lurking in the murky distance started appearing closer and closer. Ghislane actually looked frightened for once as she gave us the signal to start ascending upwards, reminding us by holding her ears not to go up to quick or as we were previously warned before we could pop a blood vessel in our brain and hemorrhage to death, not a very lovely image but neither was getting torn apart by sharks.Those giant shadows became clearer and soon enough we could recognize their indistinct species as the terrifying and more aggressive breed of sharks, the hammerhead. Grabbing Miles hand I was the last one ahead of the Guide to get on the boat imaging the worst as I waited behind Emmy and Alexandria who were the next to follow after Jeffrey and Ghislane I was in too much shock to scream or cry, I just told myself I had to stay calm to get out of this alive. Unlucky for us we found out later on that we were in their breeding territory and being sent a clear message that we were soon to be on the menu to their feeding frenzy.

We all felt like we had cheated death and I know it wasn't only my heart that was still beating out of my chest when we headed back to Jeffrey's island. Jeffrey was pale as his designer sheets and looked like he had aged another ten years in such a scared state. Ghislane took the heat off herself even barely taking a notice of beforehand and decided to poke fun at all of us frantically scurrying to get out of the water, it was just her nature, as I had never seen her move so quickly either. We got back to the island and all collapsed our fatigued bodies in our own beds for a long nap. Freshened up and much more relaxed we regaled our horrendous story again over dinner, this time in laughter. The following afternoon Ghislane piloted us all in the helicopter to St. John's Airport and we said good-bye to Alexandra where we all parted ways. I met her a few more separate times in Palm Beach at Jeffrey's Mansion, but she wasn't a regular of his, probably not as easy as the troubled girls were to bribe.

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Chapter 11

Throughout the remainder of the quickly passing year I was on a constant move with Jeffrey. Attending various dinner parties, mostly with other esteemed billionaires and widely acclaimed scientists. Jeffrey likes to surround himself with the most brilliant and powerful of minds, filling his little black book with some of the most esteemed and even infamous people in today's wealthy society. It was during those intellectual gatherings that my body was also put on the banquet menu but this time for a powerful senator George Mitchell and another prominent Nobel-Prize winning scientist who's name would be mentioned but for all the life of me can no longer remember. They would be only some of the recognizable figures of the high society that became added to my list of clientele, of course being introduced to for a lot more than just a client of massage.

As an amusement to Jeffrey's associates I also knew my place was to entertain but not to every desired content. I was to show them a good time but not the way I would have to use technique and effort for Jeffrey. The very teachings from Jeffrey himself, or my tutor, as he liked to so eloquently put it. Consistently being used and adored for the likeliness of my youthful looks I was becoming very accustomed to my lifestyle with Jeffrey, never really relaxing into it, but just accepting this as being as good as it will ever get for me. I didn't think I should be complaining, wasn't I being offered a life in exchange for servitude? Just letting the signs of my anxiety and depression pass me by while I blanketed them with my pills, suffocating under a blanket of pain is all I was really doing.

I spent Christmas and the New Years holidays with Jeffrey in N.Y.C, who doesn't celebrate the occasion, as he is of Jewish descent. Not that he was a religious man anyways, I never even saw him celebrate Hanukah either. We firstly stayed at his ranch in Santa Fe for a week, then left for a long plane trip to Paris, France where we all suffered jet lag for the next twenty four hours. We all stayed in a grand hotel with a view the Champs' Elyse.

Emmy and I shared a room and with her gifted ability to make new contacts in just a few hours, she brought out a jay to share on the rooftop at nighttime while we were overlooking the lit up Eiffel Tower. We never got really close as buddies but we both knew what we were indebted to and felt each other's sorrows. All four of us went out shopping at Chanel, D&G, Ralph Lauren, and many other little exclusive boutiques the following afternoon. As a gift Jeffrey bought me a white terry clothed goose feathered sofa and had it sent back to my apartment in Florida, and bought some new tapestries to have sent back to Santa Fe for his ranch.

We also visited his up and coming Paris apartment. It was a modern, typical flat being refurbished, and we went to see how it was all looking. Jeffrey liked to fuss about every detail and harass the builder's about their work, changing last minute details at a whim.

Days and many croissants later we left for Spain feeling bloated and sleepy. We only stayed in Spain for the afternoon, going to see another astounding Moroccan castle for Jeffrey to replicate at one of his many mansions. It was only a short plane ride to Tangier, Africa for more castles hopping. We arrived at the historic landmark and the only five star hotel in Tangier called El Minzah in the village of Ville Nouvelle. The city and outskirts were still very hostile at the time, females being warned to not walk the streets alone and not to leave the house after dark or be at risk of being raped or worse.

When we got to the room, it was oozing with every expected bit of extravagance that a luxurious historical palace should offer until I was greeted with a pile of monkey poo in the very middle of my bed. Not a happy camper I called Jeffrey, Ghislane and Emmy into my adjoining room and they all had quite a good laugh at my expense. Within a moments notice of a complaint call to the front desk and we had an attendant cleaning up my bed linen. The cleaner noticed the window was still opened, he warned not to leave it ajar at nighttime just in case another monkey wanted to make himself comfortable in my quarters.

Ghislane joked that maybe I should keep it open I might find a suitable husband before I get any older. Always the instigator of a good joke but unable to take one herself she didn't like when I poked back that it was more in her recent taste of men, since she loved to brag about her rendezvous with her various lovers. Once she came back giddy as a schoolgirl with an explosion of news, with all the build up and excitement in her voice you'd think she was the next crown princess, but she had given George Clooney a blowjob in the bathroom at some random event, she never let that one down.

We all went to explore the towns surrounding Moroccan castles and meet their royalty that lived in them. Jeffrey's personal interior designer's met us at the residences. They walked around hurriedly, scribbling notes into their clipboards and whispering between themselves. The palaces were historically unique and beautiful but I wondered how could they live so grandeur behind these walls when they lived in a city of such poverty stricken squabble. Beggars lined the streets, people could just go missing and no one could care less, and you heard of barbaric murders happening every night. Against the advice of the Palace Attendant and Jeffrey's wishes, I decided to take a stroll one afternoon, mainly just to take photos of exotic Africa and do some shopping in the village markets but I ended up being intrigued by a group of young children playing in the streets.

When I was noticed watching them, about fifteen of them came up to me and began to beg for money and food. I was over taken by the poor, hungry children and I felt sad for them all and wished I could help out somehow. When the tide of kids washed away and the street went empty, I was overcome with intrigue at these two little boys. Brothers I found out later on, and there only toy was an empty can they were kicking to each other in the middle of the street. Intelligent kids, they were able to speak three different languages, including English and I was interested to ask them about life here. They didn't seem to notice or be bothered by their poverty stricken lives. They told me about their school and parents and I thought I had just heard the saddest story ever but they were accustomed to living like that like I had been so accustomed to my degrading lifestyle for so long.

I was compelled to empty out the contents of my purse, giving them over two thousand dollars in U.S currency. A passer-byer snapped a photo of the kids and me for myself to take home as a personal souvenir before they rushed home to proudly show there parents the money. I told Jeffrey later on of my good deed and he couldn't believe I'd give away my money so carelessly. He told me I had set up their parents with enough money to feed and shelter their family for a year. Wasn't that a good thing? I couldn't believe it, not that I was well off or anything close too it, but to realize how lucky I was and to not have compassion for the lesser off, especially children of a third- world country, I wouldn't be human anymore. Then again what did I expect from someone who could numerously steal another man's daughter for the use of his own sexual pleasure with great ease.

We went out to lunch the following day with Jeffrey's team of designers to wrap things up and after Jeffrey's afternoon massage he went to the palace to have a nap. When I was all alone I thought I'd go see the culture of the local unique markets again and this time buy some trinkets to bring home. I got to sightseeing and took pictures of the legs of lamb hung over the blood drenched doorway over people's homes as to warn off evil spirits and the ghettos where the local villager's called home. I walked into many of the market's stalls and saw the most peculiar antiques, such as weaponry with the blood of it's last victim stained on it's sharp blades and body pieces of various animal's for the use of religious sacrifices. I was more interested in the different culture and respecting their ancient way of life with interest, instead of squirming like a tourist and getting grossed out. I thought it was so educational and enthralling in fact, I ended up buying a few sacrificial trinkets to have sent to my apartment in Palm Beach. Not to say that I wasn't looking forward to getting back to the luxuries of western civilization it was a bit like camping, fun and adventurous but as equally dangerous and thrilling.

When we left for the final destination of our trip I was looking forward to eating normal food again, not one to stray for foreign dishes, I'm a more of a cheeseburger and pizza kind of girl, a true sign of my American heritage.

We landed at the Heathrow Int'l Airport and greeted by a driver that would take us to Ghislane's town house in London's central that Jeffrey had recently bought and refurbished as a gift for her. Emmy said "Good-Bye" at the airport, leaving us to go to her hometown in the rural countryside nearby to visit family for a six-week holiday from work. It wasn't a very long drive before we were in the heart of the city and at Ghislane's place. I thought it was a cheery townhouse that had character and the historical pub in front of it and cobblestone streets only added a unique charm to its presence. They were going out for dinner and invited me along with them but seeing I was so exhausted from all the travelling and looking a bit melancholy, I apologetically declined going out for dinner that evening, I rather would be taking a few pills to catch up on some needed sleep. "Are you sure your Okay"? Ghislane asked as she showed me to my room, more considerate than she normally was but I assured her that I was in absolute good health, just tired from all of the recent jet lag. Without another word said she whisked off downstairs, to the car where Jeffrey was waiting for her.

I took the liberty to call my parents house to say "Hello" and catch up with them since I hadn't been home at all for the holiday season this year, always too busy working. They sounded really happy to hear from me and my mom put me on the phone to talk to my brothers as well. I got to tell them about my travels abroad and I had some cool tribal stuff from Africa that I bought for them. They sounded so proud of me, all of them, and why shouldn't they be? In everyone's convinced mind I was making great money, travelling the world, and meeting new faces everywhere I went, why should I spoil anyone's delusions, especially mine. I took my sleeping tablets and had a bath before falling into a deep and much needed sleep.

The next morning I was woken up by Ghislane who I could tell was in a chirpy mood by the way she paraded through my closed door saying "Wake-up sleepy head" and opened the window's shutters to let in the bright sunlight, she had never done anything like this before and I knew immediately something big was happening. She sat down on my bed as I rolled over from my deep slumber and I was able to mutter for an explanation as to why she was awake so early. "Besides the fact it is ten o'clock in the morning and nearly time for brunch, we have a big day planned out for you today." She was waiting for my cue to ask her "What are we doing", when I did, she responded with a convincing enthusiasm "We're going shopping for a new ensemble" she paused for a moment to build the suspense, before completing her sentence " To go dancing with a Prince of England this evening". Hoping it would be one of the younger generations, I was disappointed when she told me he was the Duke of York, Charles's younger brother Andrew. I looked at her with a fake surprised look, one I had to use on many occasions in my time with them, to give an impression of excitement. "What…wow!" I exclaimed with my gifted acting ability. It is a sad realization but I had grown more accustomed to seeing people for their significance rather than the good qualities they possessed, and was able to grin & bear the thought of what I expected lay in store for me.

Ghislane and I left shortly thereafter for the many lanes of designer shops to choose from in London. Her pep talks to prepare me for my duties towards royalty went on and on, giving me the obscure impression I was something of importance, at least for more than an evening. "Make sure your bubbly and energetic, nobody want's a dead horse" was one of the cheap tools she instilled me with. "Who knows where this could lead for you" was another. As the day grew shorter my anxiety only heightened, anticipating the Prince's arrival and unable to decide on an outfit, I picked out three. Our last stop for the day was Burberry's for a nice handbag to compliment our chosen attire. We got back to her townhouse with still a couple hours spare to get ready. After trying on all three outfits and many mental debates with myself later, I decided on the pink mini-tee and dazzling pair of denims with horses embroidered into a pattern. It seemed a lot more my style and age group rather than the other two older looking sophisticated dresses I had picked out. I told myself I was going dancing at a club not to an opera. As most young girls can be during their body changes into womanhood, I felt awkward, you know, big feet, freckles and body hair in unwanted places. They're things you just don't want when your seventeen and then you see these iconic billboards of what femininity is supposed to represent and just don't fit into that picture, never feeling what we all are already… absolutely perfect. By the time I had got ready I was a nervous wreck, but trying to keep my cool on the outside was an act. I thought it'd be a good idea to take a few Xanax before the evening unraveled and my anxiety went through the roof.

Jeffrey and I were sitting in the lounge room downstairs, waiting for Ghislane to finish getting ready. The room was silent, only stillness in the air. I stared at the mural painted onto the wall that I was facing. It was an interesting piece of artwork. In great detail it illustrated a happy looking family sitting on a bench overlooking a pond that resided on a large piece of land with a beautiful home displayed. There were also hunting hounds and the hunters chasing a game of fox like the notorious "English Hunt Pieces" throughout history. Jeffrey took notice of my enchantment into the picture and in a hushed voice proceeded to tell me that it was a portrait of Ghislane's childhood, the part she could be proud of. I never realized how prominent her family's history was in England, apparently as to Jeffrey's attest, her Father was born of poor Jewish decent in Czechoslovakia, most of his family being killed upon Nazi invasion in 1939. Fleeing to join the British Army as a young man, he changed his name a few times and made a lot of contacts in the field. After the war, a newfound Robert Maxwell went into publishing using his army contacts to establish a business initially built upon publishing scientific books from occupied Germany. In time, Maxwell acquired several British newspapers, among them the Daily Mirror, countering his wits against the likes of Rupert Murdoch along the way. However, whilst constructing his publishing empire, Maxwell compiled astronomical debts, and his equivocal financial dealings attracted the attention of governing authorities that judged him not to be looking out for his companies best interest and in the end it transpired that Robert Maxwell had been using proceeds from his employees pension funds to meet his financial debts, ruining the futures of thousands of employees. Once an esteemed Member of Parliament and publishing mogul, Robert's body was found floating in the Atlantic Ocean after he was found to be missing from his yacht, the Lady Ghislane (named after his favorite child), whilst cruising the Canary Islands in 1991. Jeffrey went on to tell me that when her Father died she was inconsolable, and in a very bad state. He picked her up from the trenches of despair and took her under his wing, and it's there she has stayed comfortable ever since. To Ghislane his peculiar need to have so many woman around and even his taste in younger than legal one's didn't seem unconventional to her. It was her own Father who was deemed a womanizer and even took a second wife whilst still married to Ghislane's mother. I would have never guessed this carefree, spirited, and vivacious woman had ever endured such sorrows. I couldn't help but look at her in a different light from then on, but not letting her know that I knew, to avoid any altercations between us.

Like clockwork Ghislane came downstairs five minutes before Prince Andrew were to arrive, wearing a tight-fitted white wooly turtleneck singlet and a nice pair of loose fitting trousers. Looking elegant and casual at the same time, a very hard look to achieve but one Ghislane had always easily mastered. They both seemed at ease poking fun at my obvious nervous state, just another ordinary night out for this extraordinary couple. The knock came at the door just after six o'clock in the evening. Ghislane greeted him and the guard who would wait for his return in the car. She led him down the hall to where Jeffrey and I were sitting. We both stood up and Jeffrey shook his hand, while Ghislane proceeded to introduce me and as I was taught by her was English custom, we both kissed on the check. We all sat down on the lounges for some tea and biscuits while conversing idle chitchat. By the sounds of it, Ghislane knew well of his recently divorced x-wife Fergie, whom they were all taking turns in slandering her for one reason or another. It was apparent there were some fresh wounds still lingering on and as good friends do, it was their way of helping him get over her. When his daughters were mentioned, Ghislane and Jeffrey treaded lightly, only speaking highly of them, and offering their sympathy to the young ones.

The conversation turned to a much lighter subject. Andrew wanted to know more about this young guest they had to join them out for dinner and dancing that evening and then the spotlight turned on me. I was more nervous than I had ever been before a night out with someone, probably the build-up Ghislane and Jeffrey had hyped this meeting up to be. To break the ice, she played her favorite guessing game…"how old do you think Jenna is"? When Andrew guessed correctly, I was seventeen years old, she was surprised, thinking I could have passed for younger. "I guess we are going to have to trade you in soon" she laughed, always the first one to throw in her quick-witted two bits, all of them chuckling along with her. Hardly a laugh at all, unknown to me at the time his eldest daughter is only five years my junior. I was finding it hard to make much conversation in the beginning, just laughing when the occasion called for it, and keeping up with Andrew's constant glances in my direction, was all I could manage.

The restaurant was a close drive for us with Andrew, his two guards and his driver following behind us. I was seated next to the Prince for dinner and Ghislane and Jeffrey next to each other, an evening pre-ordained. I was supposed to flatter him with compliments and dote on his every word spoken, but I didn't even do that for Jeffrey blatantly, it would've felt awkward to act like a bimbo for him. Instead I remained calm, cool, and collected, hoping that my nervousness wouldn't spill out at any given moment. The next place we were going was much more my style, and I found it easier to relax. We pulled up next to a Nightclub called "Tramp", a member's only nightclub, and one of the most exclusive haunts in the world for the rich and famous to be seen for the last forty or so years since it's doors first opened. Andrew's guards waited outside while we all went in to hit the dance floor. Jeffrey being the social introvert that he was found the first available empty seat in the corner but facing the dance floor to spend the evening watching everyone else have fun and Andrew went to the bar to grab us all drinks. He came back with sparkling water for Jeffrey and a cocktail for the rest of us, already knowing that Jeffrey never drank alcohol. We downed our glasses and made our way to the crowded dance floor, where I had the Prince's upmost attention. Moving his hands across the curves of my body, not to shy away from the fact

that he was in public, he was whispering sweet nothings into my ear and kissing my neck. I would just giggle not really knowing how to reply to an aging man with a bad smile and terrible moves, it would sound too much of a lie if I retaliated back about his swagger. He was the most incredibly hideous dancer I had ever seen and couldn't help but laughing on the dance floor and shooting glances of embarrassment to Jeffrey and Ghislane who were having a good time laughing at my expense…as the always did.

After an hour of pelvic smashing to the D.J's pumping mixes we finally exited the floor, his royal highness was dripping with sweat and ready to embark onto a quieter scene where he said we could be alone, not knowing that it had already been arranged for all of us to meet back at Ghislane's place but complied with his so called thoughtful request. I was so anxious about getting back to the townhouse, knowing what expectations I would have to not only have meet but also exceed in this case. Ghislane and Jeffrey seemed impressed at my attempts to entertain his royal highness, so far giving him exactly what he wanted the impression that I idolized him. They told me that he really liked me and was having a great time, so far tonight. When we got to the townhouse, his guards walked him to the door, staying to wait outside in the car. Ghislane met him and brought him upstairs where Jeffrey and I were in the study. We all chatted in the hall for a few minutes and I was able to have Jeffrey snap a photo of us together, one that would cause much controversy for the Buckingham Palace in many years to come. The conversation didn't linger on much longer before Jeffrey and Ghislane dispersed downstairs together, leaving me to my own sort of royal duties. They walked away giddy as if they were teenagers imposing on young lovers about to embark on a romantic evening.

Next to the study was the bathroom where I led him to next. The room was dimly lit masking the light from showing the disparity in my eyes. It was a beige marble tiled floor with porcelain Victorian style bathtub in the middle of the room and nowhere near the size of Jeffrey's residences. I turned on the taps for the tub and the heat from the water began to steam up the small room. On the basin were aromatic oils, lotions and soaps, loving the scent of floral notes, I poured in the lavender bath oil. Trying to do the best of my youthfulness to try and act seductive, I gradually began to strip off my clothing, piece by piece. Giving him time to savor the moment to come. He loved every second of it as I went over to where he was waiting and watching, then began to undress him at a much quicker pace. We kissed and touched each other before submersing into the hot water, where we both continued to reenact foreplay. He was adorning my young body, particularly my feet, caressing my toes and licking my arches. That was definitely a first for me and I couldn't help but laugh, I hoped he didn't expect the same treatment back. Through my recent experiences with Rena, I drew a line with extreme fetishes, especially ones that would involve my tongue and feet in the same sentence. It wasn't hard to get him wound up to the point where he just wanted to have the rest of me so we dried off from the cold and retired to my bedchambers for the longest ten minutes of my life. Moments later and without any real emotional attachment, he burst in ecstasy, leaving me to my own feelings of dismay. As relieved as I was to see the experience come to pass with him, it was finally sinking in that I would never be anything more than but a muse. Still trying to ascertain a surreal dream a young girl once held but no longer the same girl I was no longer sure that the dream was even real anymore. In the whirlwind thrown together by wealth, power, and privilege I was but a grain of sand and felt helpless down the road I was naively being led down. When the real picture was unveiled, later in my life, I had nothing but memories filled with sorrow to remember of my teenage years.

Jeffrey, Ghislane, and I left for the states to conclude our long journey home to the U.S.A. I was so happy when we landed on our soil and called T.J from my cell phone to see if he'd meet me at the airport instead of going back to Jeffrey's, he'd be there within twenty minutes, he was so happy to hear my voice and that I was back in town. So ecstatic to be getting away from my life of servitude for the next few days, I was sourly disappointed when I got off the phone. As if he'd been listening to my entire conversation, Jeffrey told me he'd like a massage back at his place and he could pay me at the same time for my trip with him. With much dismay I had to call T.J back and cancel the arrangements, I wouldn't see him until later that night, in which one of Jeffrey's staff would drive me home and I would be too exhausted to do anything.

Chapter 12

When we got back to Jeffrey's mansion in Palm Beach he wanted to thank me for showing his friend, the Prince, such a good time. Rewarding my diligence with an extra sum of money and luring me deeper into his goal of keeping me at his side as his personal amusement that he could lend out at anytime. Further proving his capability of using the vulnerable impressions of a young girl to influence and intimidate his fellow peers of

like minds. Jeffrey didn't want to know the grim details of how it all happened on my intimate night with the Prince, he just asked simply if I thought that I did well in keeping his friend happy. Knowing already that the evaluation of my performance I gave was already discussed between them, I just as simply replied back with a nod of approval. Though I did have a laugh with Jeffrey about the Prince's weird fixation on my feet and lets just say that he was quite tickled with Andrew's quirky obsession, having a good ol'chuckle at my eccentric encounter. I was paid extremely well this time, putting my money earned into nothing but popping pills and alcohol by shouting my so called friends a good time, aiming for the attempt to forget about my experiences abroad. I partied like that to feel young again, my age and most of all to self-anesthetize my troubles from within. It wasn't like I was waiting for someone to arrive on his white horse and take me away to a magical world. I simply yearned for more out of life than being someone's replaceable amusement. Still a romantic at heart I would often get lost in my daydreams, imagining a new beginning with a strong man that would show me an enduring love, safety in his arms, and a lifetime friendship. Though the suggestion of true loves existence was only a dream for now, something I could only read about in novelistic fairytales but the passing thought from time to time was warmly envisioned. With my inner most desires being locked away in a deep crevice of my heart, I knew my romantic notions would be absurd in Jeffrey's eyes. For some unknown reason to me he couldn't allow himself to give love or receive someone's heart in return. Once he said to me when I asked him if he ever thought he would settle down and find Mrs. Right and he told me he didn't believe that love with one monogamous partner was possible but he found that love with many was. I thought at the time it had something to do with having so much money and everyone wanting him for that instead of seeing him as a person and even felt bad for him, but now I can understand from his recent lessons unlearned that it was a simple equation of his twisted perversion to become infatuated with the vulnerable youth off the streets. Spending so much time in the entrapment of Jeffrey's embrace, I was becoming numb to the feelings and aspiration to ever climb above this deep hole I had dug myself into. I knew I wanted to escape from this bizarre form of first class slavery but I still didn't have the tools necessary to help me get out. How could I have? Everyone that knew me believed I was living this enchanting life, a rags to riches success story that most people dream of, only I knew the price to be paid for all of this and I was the only one who could pay for it. Underestimating my true self, I was settled by Jeffrey's side for now considering him to be someone to look up to, my mentor. Such a complicated battle within myself, it is one I still ache to fully comprehend today.

Sunny spring days melted away the ice off the frozen streets of New York and the harsh winter winds begun to gently blow away the dead leaves, making the caged trees appear to have some form of life again. I hated the cold winters there, it would only add to my depression being locked indoors. Give me hot Florida days blistering in the sun where I can swelter by a cool pool and sip cocktails with pieces of fruit and little oriental umbrella's floating around. What a vision of solace? Looking around my extravagantly decorated mid-evil room I was reminded of the desolation that I was more than accustomed too. Knowing it wouldn't be long before I was summoned again for another ritualistic occurrence in fornicating with my master, I hardly bothered to leave my assigned chambers, scarcely being sent home for a moments break, I just accepted my fate. As I predicted the intercom buzzed momentarily and I heard Ghislane's voice come over and request to meet them in Jeffrey's study. Not an odd call, I would often meet him there first so he could tie up some unfinished business before heading to the dungeon, or what was thought to be the massage room. Making my way down the hall, I had an eerie feeling wash over me, as if I had several pairs of eyes on me, watching my every move. A cold chill moved up my spine and I had to move my thoughts elsewhere, too easy behind these walls to succumb to my fearsome anxieties. I punched in number one once inside the elevator and it took me down to the floor where Jeffrey and his surprise guest were waiting with anticipation behind closed doors. I cracked open the heavy wooden doors and a familiar face revealed itself. Definitely not expected or pre-warned on my part but I already knew what he was here for or at least why I was called down to the study. Prince Andrew had that notorious cheesy grin slapped over his face, as he looked me up and down like a shiny new car on display and he was about to take it for a test drive. Ghislane led me to the decadent sofa he was lounging on and twirled me around to give him a good lookover before sitting me down on his lap. Like a show pony I knew exactly how they wanted me to be paraded around, with the last of my dignity long lost, I had nothing more to lose. It was easy to give them the reaction they desired, all I had too do was pretend to be entertained by their lewd gestures, and when Andrew cupped my breast with a doll made in his image, I only giggled away. Ghislane wanted to take a picture of the bizarre scene and even got Johanna, another one of Jeffrey's so-called personal assistants, to come sit on his other knee for the snapshot, giving the impression girls couldn't stay away from Randy Andy.

Many crude jokes later and I was asked to show Andrew to the upstairs massage room. I'm sure he already knew where it was from previous

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encounters with Jeffrey's "staff" but I led the way anyways, as if he was now my guest of honor. Entering into the dim room it took a few minutes for my eyes to adjust to the darkness, but knowing my way around the room was enough to find the shower. I turned on the steam room and began to undress myself. Andrew followed my lead and disrobed, throwing his attire to the floor. I wanted to run and hide feeling his hands touch me again, but my servitude for Jeffrey kept me there. Getting out of his stronghold I turned my attention to the steam filling up and tried to turn his attention to the marble bench where I suggested he take a seat while I rubbed his feet. By the look in his eyes I knew he could care less about a foot massage, his real desires were being shown by the arousal his body was forming. He indicated where he wanted me to touch him and how. I fulfilled his seedy requests, but only just. There was no pleasure in this for me, the only thing I derived from this event was to sink further into my slumber of depression. I couldn't remember a time when I felt needed for anything other than my body or amusements thereof. After his massage was thoroughly conducted I couldn't wait to get back to my room for another shower. Sitting on the floor of the shower under the harsh spray of water, I scrubbed my body where he touched me. Feeling abhorrent and ashamed what I had become, I let the water wash away the grime.

As the days progressed into nights and the nights followed a trail of destructive months, my outlook on life had diminished into utter sadness. I had lost my spark and my ability to look like I could handle the abusive state of affairs I had drifted into. Sinking deeper in the euphoric state of being on coke and pills, not only was my mentality dwindling away but also my looks. I sure as hell didn't feel like a seventeen year old anymore and now I wasn't looking like one. My eyes had dark circles underneath them from not sleeping and my bones protruded from my skinny waistline and chest. This made Jeffrey apprehensive in keeping me around as often and before I had a moments notice, I was out of money and looking for a job. When I questioned him what was happening, he told me I wasn't the same girl he had first met some time ago now and looked like I needed a break from working so much. " I'll call you next time I'm in town" was the last thing he said to me.

Chapter 13

Going back to an average teenagers life was more of a harder transition than I would've ever thought. Jeffrey stopped paying my expensive rent and I was forced to get off the drugs and look for a real job to feed and shelter T.J and I. It was much harder than it sounded, but I was craving

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this in every possible way. Even though a week's wages for working a full-time job as a waitress didn't come close to the money I had made in a couple hours of working for Jeffrey, I was happier than I had been in a long time. I made some friends at my new job and found my duties to be easy and pleasant. I was good at making customers smile and keeping them happy becoming the waitress that made the most tips for the night, which in turn made my co-workers happy since we'd all split the tips at the end of the week. For the first time in a long time I had boys my age hitting onto me, and not that I was ever taken aback by there attempts but it reminded me of how it felt to be around a younger crowd. I missed so much of what I couldn't get back and the more I tasted it, the more I remembered how to smile. The relationship between T.J and I began to falter in a way that was beyond reconciliation. Fights became physical and I saw sides to him that only pushed me away more. He refused to look for work to help pay bills and he became utterly frustrated not having his usual cocktail of assorted drugs to keep him from feeling anything at all. He didn't like the fact I was growing inside and thinking beyond his elusive world. I had gone through too much to accept another form of abuse and degradation. Making that point very clear to him by kicking him out of my apartment back to live with his parents, I felt liberated like never before. I kept up with my rent and cleaned my act up. Enrolling in a yoga course and keeping my focus on staying fit and healthy became my only source of enjoyment. I was free and living for myself.

While out doing the grocery shopping one evening I couldn't help but stop at the local pet store and fell in love with a furry pooch. She was a Japanese Chow-Chow and a bundle of fur that more resembled a baby brown bear than a dog. I took her home with me and instantly she became my best friend. We went for several walks a day and she bore the brunt of many tear filled conversations, she was my loyal companion who understood more than anyone had before, all I really need was someone to listen and funny enough it was her that filled that hole.

Nearly three months had gone by and not a word from Jeffrey or Ghislane. With T.J out of the picture now too all I had to concentrate on was work, my parents and brothers, and of course my dog, Mary-Jane. I was going to family night dinners and bon fires again. My older brother was getting married to an amazing woman in a few weeks and I got to be apart of their beautiful ceremony. Small details of life's journey that I already missed so much of and now being able to smile at the simple things day in day out really seemed to put the real value of life into perspective for me. Everything seemed to be working out for itself and I was really happy, until he came back, T.J thought he'd come over my place one evening while I was sitting at home just watching TV.

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Obviously mentally distorted from whatever choice of drugs he was smoking that night. He screamed down my apartment complex, going mad and scaring my neighbors I felt like I had no choice but to let him inside. I tried talking to him as a good friend would, just wanting him to see what he was doing to himself and what he had become. Part of me still loved him and took pity on watching him spiral downwards. Taking him back into my life was not a decision I made whole-heartedly, but was something I did out of guilt and what I thought was loyalty. He moved his clothes back to my place, which was all he ever owned anyways and we tried to pick up the broken pieces. T.J being still badly addicted to many drugs, I had to be very careful where I kept my jewelry and expensive items. I decided to rent out a space at a local spot and store my cherished items away, just taking the necessary precautions, I thought.

Still not working I knew how he was scraping by money and I didn't agree with it, T.J was a known thief and had been caught several times attempting to steal things, even as stupid as DVD's and PS2 or Xbox games from a local Blockbuster. He even stole from his parents, his sister and his brother and would probably steal a piece of candy from a five year old kid if he knew that it would get him his next fix. He hated the change in myself, realizing I couldn't be brought back down by his ways but knowing I still stuck by his side and defended him from anything that would hurt him wanting to believe that he still wanted show the bits of human nature left in his empty heart.

Unable to stand by and see me do well for myself he contemplated a way to try and bring me down. After a busy shift one night, he retaliated with another show of control. I had just finished cleaning up my area and setting out the tables to be ready for the next day when I went to the bar to hang up my apron and put my nights tips in the tip bowl on the counter by the beer tap. On one of his drug induced rampages he stormed into the restaurant where I was working and started to pick a fight with me. I knew he was off his face when he started accusing me of sleeping with my manager on shift that evening. Having no bias or ground to stand on in his attempt to make me look bad in front of everyone, I just laughed him off as a drunk idiot who needed to go home and sleep off the night's repercussions, although I was fuming inside that he embarrassed me but I still made excuses for him and told my boss I had to leave early to bring him home.

The bar was deserted as T.J waited alone for me slumped in a barstool and looking worse for wear. I had to go to the back of the restaurant and do some explaining to the manager on duty, I couldn't afford to lose my job over this incident. Surprisingly he was sympathetic towards my dilemma and even told me I could do a lot better than that schmuck, patting my back and telling me to have a couple days off. I punched out

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and headed to my car with T.J in tow. For the rest of the night he was oddly quiet and asked to be dropped off at his parent's house, I was more than obliged to do so. I couldn't stand the sight of him let alone want to be around him tonight. Being so revved up it didn't yet dawn on me that something wasn't right. The next morning I was woken up by an alerting phone call, I had the manager from the restaurant where I worked, on the other end screaming at me and asking where the money is. I sat up in bed, completely awake now, and asked him back, "What are you talking about, what money?" His tone had calmed a bit and he could hear the earnestly in my voice and explained his accusations "The tip jar was empty after you had left last night and there was over a hundred and fifty dollars in there, now it's missing". The answer hit me instantly and I got a terrible knot in my stomach…T.J. When I left him at the bar not even thinking about the tip bowl to talk with the manager, he saw an opportunity to fund more drugs and he took it. That's why he didn't even want to come back to my apartment last night. It was all too clear for me now and I tried to explain to my manager about my boyfriend's sickness and asked him to take the lost money out of my wages. "I have no choice but to let you go and file a police report for the missing money". I couldn't believe what I was hearing. How did things turn upside down so quickly? I exclaimed "Even though I'm paying you from my pocket for money I didn't even steal and you've never even had any problems from me before?". His apologies were short and icy, nothing that could be done. I slammed down the receiver only to pick it up again to dial T.J's parents house and to no surprise he hadn't slept there last night and was not able to be reached. I felt like I was in a bad dream I couldn't wake up from and with no money to pay rent, eat, or even survive, I was back to the drawing board.

The week passed without hearing from T.J, he was in hiding, for now. When the phone rang early one morning I expected it to be him, instead it was a surprise phone call from a familiar voice. Jeffrey decided to give me a call to invite me over to his Palm Beach mansion for some lunch and to catch up, it really was just his way of finding out if I was cleaned up and ready to come back to work for him. With my life in chaos once again and having to borrow money off my parents for grocery food, I saw a quick solution to my situation and was even convinced this is what I had to do to take care of myself.

He greeted me at the door and led me inside. Ghislane was at her usual spot, her desk working away, and we headed past her with a quick wave and lip-synced a "Hello", not wanting to disturb her important sounding phone call. She glanced up quickly and gave a brisk wave my way, then put her attention back to the computer. Once we were inside the poolside cabana, which was Jeffrey's office, & gym, Jeffrey took a seat behind his

desk and told me to have a seat across from him. He took a sip of water from an already poured glass and asked if I'd like some. "Yes, Thank you" My reply was short and polite, already just wanting to get this meeting done and over with. His face was like steel and his expressions were stern, I felt like a child in trouble sitting in the principles office.

He cut straight to the chase wanting to know "Are you on drugs anymore?" There was a moment's pause as I took a deep breath and told him the entire truth. "I got really depressed for awhile and coped with my emotions by blanketing them with mind-altering substances. Just smoking a jay to relax wasn't good enough anymore. I needed to be high and flying to believe I was happy and dealing with all of life's curveballs. Snorting things like coke and popping amphetamines replaced my sorrows with an overflow of endorphins, making it possible to keep up with everything, until I would come down and the cycle just kept on repeating itself".

He listened to me continue to tell him about the good things that have come from the break. Like my dog, yoga, and working at a restaurant, making lots of new friends but most of all, I got my smile back, without the drugs this time. He was really happy to hear the upside of everything, but there was one thing I was reluctant to tell him about. My recent travail that T.J effortlessly caused at the restaurant where I was so happily employed. As my manager had warned he had to file a police report stating that after I had left, the tips were gone, putting the blame solely on me.

Giving Jeffrey a clear picture of the entire ordeal he exclaimed "What are you doing with this idiot Jenna, he is no good for you! I know you can do better for yourself, why do you let him drag you down every time?" Nodding my head in concurrence I went on to finish my epic drama. "I received a phone call from the PBCP asking me to come in about the money, I told them what happened over the phone but they still want me to come in. I don't want to have a record for something I never did or ever would do!" I put my face into my hands and covered the tears now trickling down my cheeks. "I just can't believe this is happening to me when everything has been going so uphill, now I'm out of work and in trouble" I wiped my face and looked up at him " What do I do?" Enabling him as my mentor once again, his sly grin said it all. Jeffrey normally hated when girls made waves in any way and this one would be considered a tsunami but this time it worked to his favor. He wanted me to come back to work for him, continuing my massage studies and I needed his help. In his eyes he was doing me a solid, which in return I would have to scratch more than his back for. Taking his time to contemplate what to respond back and what solution he could offer, I began to worry that maybe I shouldn't have done this.

Pulling a few tissues out of the box, he passed them across the desk to me. Trying to retract any damage done I said to him "I must look like such a mess to you and making you listen to my saga, I am so sorry… I shouldn't have come to you with all of this." He looked surprised and sympathetic "Quite the opposite actually. I'm glad you've come to me for help. I have got a lot of connections especially with the Palm Beach County Police Department. I give them regular hundred thousand dollar donations, and after I speak with them there will be nothing more to worry about. To be honest I'm more in shock about how much can happen to you in such a short time, your life is one big soap opera"

Now he was chuckling and trying to make light of my somber mood. Laughing along too I replied, " I know right? Drama just hangs around me like a bad smell". We did some more light-hearted catching up and went out to the poolside for some lunch and a swim, concluding the evening with an erotic massage upstairs. He paid me the usual two hundred dollars and asked me to come back tomorrow. "In the meantime I don't want you thinking about your sticky situation, consider it dealt with". His attempt to brighten my spirits had worked relieved about money and the police but now I owed myself to him feeling indebted to him more now than ever.

Chapter 14

As was promised I never heard back from the Police Department and Jeffrey had his favorite girl back by his side. We picked up where we left off ever better than before, I being entirely subservient to every sexual desire of his engaging myself in any role he wanted me to play. As he was getting older his appetite for sex never hazed, if anything it only increased. The orgies with other girls got larger in numbers and his appeal to younger girls, new toys and wilder nights expanded from once and awhile to quite an often occurrence in Jeffrey's company. I put it down his new friend and business investment, Jean-Luc Brunel.

A long time agent for young and upcoming models, Brunel, a French citizen, was known for roaming the world in search of young, naïve beauties living in poverty stricken countries and willing to do just about anything for money. He would procure them mostly from Clubs in South America and the Former Soviet Republic. Filling their heads with fairytales of America and large amounts of money, he would promise them all of the finer things in life, sometimes even throwing a pill in their drink, if that meant getting them in his bed was becoming too much of a task. What he wanted is what he got, which is why him and Jeffrey ultimately became close pals and he invested one million dollars into Brunel's company. In return Jeffrey now had supply of girls on tap for him to choose from.

With the assistance of each other, Brunel obtaining the illegitimate visas for underage-overseas girls and Jeffrey housing them at his brother's apartment complex on 301 E 66th St, Manhattan, they were quite the team. Jeffrey and Brunel would charge them for rent, forcing them to work for them selling their bodies for money, nude pictures, and even pornography. These were what seemed like really nice people with not so nice intentions setting an impression of how the dignified wealth play and behind closed doors they had as much civilized manners as a barbaric chimpanzee in heat. Giving a girl a step-up in finances by teaching them there only worth is what lay between their legs, us girls all were the same in the end, regardless of what country we came from, what language we spoke or our cultural indifferences, we all were being used for one thing alone, our youthful looks and beautiful bodies.

Being Jeffrey's permanent sidekick, I would have to part-take in a many of the hedonistic exploitations that went on at one of his many residences, which meant having to be uninhibited with many girls my age and younger. Being complete strangers was hard enough but we couldn't even understand each other, speaking in different tongues we were expected to excel at preforming many acts of lovemaking and foreplay on each other, while being observed by a man in a corner jerking off. Not exactly what I would call an advantage in my stage of life, but in my head I was convinced we all had to do what we had to do to get on with life and if that meant doing all of this to keep Jeffrey happy, then I would do that.

It didn't take long in the accompaniment of Brunel for Jeffrey to hit an all time low, at least one that I knew about. Stupid enough or sick enough, I don't know which one it is or both but Jeffrey bragged about his birthday present from Brunel, once accepting three, twelve year old girls, sisters at that. He replayed the descriptive events with me telling me how they all massaged him and finished him off orally. He was so excited about the entire event, replaying over and over again over the next course of weeks how cute they were and how you could tell they were really young by the small amount of hair growth in their pubic region and non-existent breasts. A twelve year old, are you serious? I thought to myself. I still can't shake the feeling of disgust when I recall the look on his face as he told me time and time again of how his lust brought him to that profound low. He went on to tell me how Brunel bought them in Paris, France, from their parents. Offering them the usual sums of money, visas, and modeling career prospects was a bribe of the worst kind, they were just children. Laughing the whole way through, Jeffrey thought it was absolutely brilliant how easily money seduced all walks of life…nothing or no one that couldn't be bought in his eyes. Behind the two of them followed a destructive trail of those in their path that were misused, violated, degraded in a variety of ways for one purpose… to satisfy the desires of the perversion that rotted their hearts.

The next couple of months I spent in Jeffrey's company, my life was revolved around him and his petty happiness. Arising to the occasion, I was no longer his teenage sidekick, I was growing into being a young woman and my body was blossoming like never before. Out of the awkward stages of my life, I now took to looking after myself like never before. Regular sessions in tanning beds and keeping fit became my life outside of Jeffrey. He kept telling me what a beautiful woman I was developing into and would offer suggestions to help me look good. Sending me to dentists for regular teeth whitening consultations or helping me choose my attire for the evening, he was ushering me into a whole new position, training me up for something else, but I was unsure of what that was.

Being a snotty little teenager was a girl of the past. Now I had to be his eloquent speaking, desirable to all and almost his personal porcelain doll. I went everywhere with him again, all of his eclectic dinner parties, conferences, and meetings with various members of parliament, famous celebrities, and other esteemed billionaires…most of whom lived by the same rule of thumb as Jeffrey did. Quite an alarming realization having to accept this world the way it is. Jeffrey knew all of the right people in this game, and trading girls for favors is how he kept in the circle. He was at the center of it all, blackmail being the only thing next to money with the ability to pull a many of strings, his conniving ulterior motive was to drag all that he could down to his pitiful state of mind. Inviting easily tempted acquaintances to his island or his other various residences he would bring out the assortment of young girls and pass them around like they were cocktails on a platter. No girl had a choice in whom they went with, only completing a task, we would have to charm and bedazzle these ageing fat men who other than paying for it would've never had a shot at getting to know a beautiful girl intimately. I personally belonging to Jeffrey rarely had to be loaned out and it was a big occasion, or should I say favor, if I was. I'll never really know what made me so important or special to Jeffrey, it definitely had nothing to do with love. I guess in the end I will always put it down to my capability of being whomever he wanted when he wanted, so compliant it just made it easy for him to have a personal toy at his constant disposal. All I can say is I lived in a jail with no bars, and in a country where slavery was supposedly abolished a long time ago but still existed right underneath everybody's noses. Myself and so many other girls were walking proof of it.

I still was given proper training in massage therapy from time to time, keeping me from looking back at being a teenager with no responsibilities to being a young adult with prospering titles. He knew I wanted to be self-sufficient so bad I would do anything for it and by giving me this dream to hold to only kept me in check. I looked forward to my training sessions, holding onto every word passed down to me and after the session was complete I would hurry back to my room and transfer the information into a workbook with associating exercises.

Trying my new moves on Jeffrey always impressed him, he would get excited hearing about my passion for knowledge and would tell me he could see it transfer into my massages, always giving it my all, my hands were a focused energy when I was at work. Using every ounce of strength to apply on a body, many were astounded in what I could do for being such a small girl, and Jeffrey loved it, using me for a two-hour massage "with benefits" sometimes being over twice a day. Ghislane would sometimes use me to massage her still but it wasn't as common, she preferred a man for that job.

Then would come the odd client here and there, of course set up by Jeffrey. Most of which were orchestrated to get beautiful girls comfortable and consequently naked then he would go in for the kill, so to speak, touching them intimately, in their most private of places like their vagina, breasts or anal. When he had us where he wanted, willing and able, then would come the toys, outfits and so on. A scheme he has used time and time again, telling those who know him well "he had never been turned down yet". It was starting to dawn on me how I wasn't getting any clientele that weren't used for Jeffrey's benefit and would make me wonder if I just wasn't good enough for that, but I kept quiet, never wanting to make waves like I had before.

To give me a break from it all as if Jeffrey didn't want to overload me again, he would send me away to his ranch for a few days, what he knew I considered being a small slice of heaven on earth. I'd spend my days roaming the hills, riding horses, and enjoying the solitude of my own company. One afternoon I was out exploring the land on Jeffrey's ranch which covered hundred's of acres with nothing but a bottle of water, my sketchbook and a small case of oil paint. I was on the search for something interesting to paint. A great pastime of mine, it made my soul quiet by creating beauty with my brush. I loved to recreate the images I saw on paper. I would paint anything beautiful that caught me eyes interest, from underwater scenes, animals to people and even fruit, I loved vibrant colors and emotion on display but my favorite soon became the landscape of the Santa Fe's rolling hills and earthly green and beige tones and in certain light it would illuminate into a golden shine. To grasp that feeling I was absolved in at the hardest of times became my greatest inner-achievement, like taking a piece of that serenity and putting on paper for me to keep in my heart where it still is today, closing my eyes I am able to see it, being there anytime I need to. I was enjoying the heat and taking in the deserts sights when I stumbled off the track and into the wilderness. Exploring everything new to me was my second nature and never even entered my mind what would've happened if I went too far or got lost. I would rather face Mother Nature's wrath than humankind's any day!

After about an hour of drifting off track I came to a pile of rubble, looking like the remnants of an old pueblo made out of clay and rock. I picked up what looked like half of a clay bowl and noted that it had Indian designs etched into the side of it. Excited about my findings I decided to do some more exploring around the fields surrounding the historic site. I collected rare pieces of arrowheads, utensils, and parts of many broken bowls with artwork telling tales of their own. Time was of no essence here and before I even realized the sun had sunk deeper into the hills leaving me without any light to find my way back to the pathway. Feeling silly now after passing by a familiar looking boulder twice over, I was startled when I heard some poor animal become dinner for another, it's screams of agony only amplified louder and echoed in my ear drums, heightening the hairs on the back of my neck and making my heart beat nearly out of my chest.

I was lost and confused before but now I was petrified with fear. Taking me over three hours to find my way back to the path and in the direction of Jeffrey's mansion was a mission, so relieved in the end and so were the housemaids after I hadn't showed up for dinner, assuming I must've been out for one of my usual adventures. I went to bed strenuously exhausted that night and as I was falling asleep the phone rang, it was a call from Jeffrey who had been alerted of my disappearance. "What happened tonight, one of the maids called me to tell me you hadn't come back from your walk this evening" Detecting a tone of anger in his voice I tried to distract him by telling him of my findings and he scolded me for being gone for so long without anyone knowing where I was. Going back to the Indian remnants, I persisted on telling him what I had found. In the end he was just worried about me becoming a liability, but had to make it sound as if he cared. " Don't worry Jeffrey, I won't be doing that again. I can honestly say I have learned my lesson and the next time I want to explore I promise to take someone with me". I satisfied his worry of me being a future nuisance and with that I was finally able to tell him what I had discovered on my walk. He was impressed but did not sound surprised. "You must've been gone a long time if you found the old Indian pueblo's, just be careful you don't say anything about where you found the stuff on my property, it

could become a sight for historical preservation and that means the government could ultimately own my land."

I acknowledged his request and told them they were just a gift for my Mom, who was in love with Indians "Wait until she see's I brought her back real artifacts, she is going to totally freak out." He didn't mind that I was taking them. In fact he admired my curiosity and adventurous spirit. He reminded me that tomorrow was my last day. I would be driven to the Albuquerque International Airport the day after next, to meet Jeffrey in New York, for how long, only he knew. Giving Jeffrey many thanks for a great week, letting him know how much I appreciated these small breaks away, we then said goodnight. Hanging up the phone I had caught my second wind and set out to the kitchen to find a late-night snack. Raiding the fridge and pantry, I found some frozen pizzas and popcorn. I put on a movie and munched on the popcorn while the pizza cooked. Some 1980's dreadful alien flick got the better of me that night. It was based on a true story about people abductions from extraterrestrial beings, which were, like I was, visiting a remote area. I suddenly hated being alone on a ranch in the middle of nowhere. I munched down my burnt, crunchy pizza and became further enveloped in the thick plot. Leaving on the TV and the lights on that night, I spent my night tossing and turning, peeking through the small open crevices of the comforter, half expecting to see an alien being in my bedroom.

Living through the night was a relief and I laughed at myself in the morning, how spooked did I get? When I got to New York, Jeffrey, and Ghislane had a good laugh over my tale of survival in the wilderness and then the alien scare. "Your always having the best adventures" Ghislane exclaimed. We were similar in that way, both being s bit of free spirits it was really only her non-existence of moral standards that differentiated the two of us, in that way. "How do you know you weren't abducted and probed? I mean look at you and all that time alone on the ranch, what do you think Jeffrey, could she pass off as an alien?" Expectedly, Ghislane poked fun at me, her usual fun past time. Our relationship was an odd one, never threatened by each other but always precautious towards one another nonetheless able to crack a joke together, but when it came time to "work" it was no fun and games, she was intensely serious. "With a sense of humor like yours I would tend to think that you are the one from another planet." Just friendly banter between the two of us, then Jeffrey had to jump in with his two bits, "I think you might be onto something Ghislane." I squinted my eyes and gave them both an exaggerated death stare and pretended to grab my stomach in pain, "I think some things trying to get out of me", putting my fist in my shirt to reenact a scene from Alien, I fell onto the couch and faked my death. "I knew it" Ghislane shouted and jumped on me to begin tickling me all over and we all broke out into laughter. It was those fun times that made me feel like we were all apart of this really perplexed family. We did everything together similar to normal families like eat dinner, watch TV, and travel it was only the hedonistic and corrupt side to these two deviates that made them a peculiar pair.

Getting turned on at the two of us playing together, Jeffrey came over to the couch we were on and pulled down his sweatpants revealing his erect manhood. All of the laughter stopped, now it was time for work. Pushing my head into his pubic region I had to give into his perverted wants. Ghislane started to undress me. Once I was bare she loved starting with my breasts. She cupped them in her hands and brushed her fingers over my hardened nipples heading downwards pressing her lips deeply into my skin, I had to maneuver my body on the couch in a complex position to give them both what they wanted. And just like that, without even a moment's notice I could be put on the spot and have to amuse them in any way they wanted. A shameful way to make someone feel like a used toy, I wasn't around for companionship I was there for one thing, I was a compliant piece of eye candy.

Twenty minutes later and Jeffrey had erupted in pleasure. Ghislane sat up, still fully dressed, and wiped the sides of her mouth with her hands, giving a vindictive little chuckle, "That was fun." Jeffrey concurred with a sly grin arching his back for a stretch just looking able to utter the request "Why don't you come up with me upstairs for a steam bath and massage, I need to be loosened up after that?" It was more of a statement than a request, as if I had the choice to say "No thanks, I'm actually tired myself and would love to just relax" instead I would reply with my accustomed trained obedience, "No problem, when your ready lead the way." I had to get dressed again being that we were in Ghislane's downstairs office. Putting my clothes back on, Ghislane thought she had buttered him up just where she wanted him to ask for him to come have a look at her new townhouse renovations when he was finished with his massage. A very strange relationship those two have, there's a definite love flowing between them but not a passionate one, more like a respectful business, he gets what he wants…an uncountable number of girls and she gets what she wants, simple and sweet…an uncountable amount of money. The two things in life that can create such beautiful moments or the most horrendously terrible of them all, is sex and money.

Chapter 15

I joined him for a shower, steam bath and concluded his needs with a massage while listening to classical music. I knew he didn't want anything sexual from me now seeing he got what he already wanted downstairs, no this one was purely therapeutic. My favorite massages to give, making me feel like an actual real therapist. I lathered him in aromatic oils and let my hands discover the ways to unlock the stresses that his body held. After the massage was concluded we were going downstairs to get ready to go see Ghislane's townhouse as he had promised her earlier. He loved taking the hidden staircase while I hated it. I was so creeped out by his choice of décor, the blood red carpets, violent medieval paintings, and sculptures of the pagan god Pan, all of it representing the darker side of hedonism his lifestyle provoked. Spiraling down the hallway along with each step you took came with a pair of eyes that followed your every step. Brown, blue, green, hazel, all of the colors were there, staring at you the entire way down. As each step progressed, so would my anxiety to get out of there.

We found Ghislane where we had left her, in her office. She had just received an order in, a satellite camera with a twelve-inch flat screen. She told us how it was used to pick up any person in any location with the quick insert of an address. Quite a powerful new toy I thought, but it was only a minute display of what the rich could afford, what use they would get out of it was another concern. Soon after she was done figuring out the controls on the camera, we made a rare and first for me pit stop, the security room. What I thought was our way out by the front door was another hidden door. I was in shock as I was led into a room, so discreet that in three years I never even knew it existed. I kept my head down most of the time, knowing how secretive this must be being another door was an entire security base within his mansion. What I could see when I stole a glimpse here and there was an array of tiny screens, twenty odd or something. Small screens showing various rooms of the mansion I had recognized. The images were constantly changing so I found it hard to pinpoint an exact location but from the décor and short glimpses I suddenly knew from then on that my feelings of my every move being watched inside his corridors was now more than a possibility but was actually happening. Jeffrey spoke to an obese Spanish guy at the desk, whose job was to disgustingly overlook all of the video feedback. Kill two birds with one stone Jeffrey thought, free porn to share with all of his pedophile friends and when the occasion called for it, a security system all at one expense. Ever consumed with making money as well as saving it, I was again astonished at Jeffrey's capabilities. I didn't want to even think how deep the video infiltrated, pretending like I never saw anything at all I put the memory to the back of my mind and went on about my day. Stopping at Ghislane's new townhouse, another gift bought and paid for by Jeffrey, he pointed out needed changes all over the place, driving the builders mad, as always. He wanted the place to scream out "GHISLANE" with a bold statement. Checkered floors and bold colors was the theme, like the queen of hearts from Alice in Wonderland, very well suited I thought.

The dust from the walls being torn down chocked my throat and the elevator was not in use, the stairs were hardly either. The whole house was in bad shape then having to go up three flights of rickety steps was a bit of a risk too but worth it once you made it to her future walk in wardrobe or to us commoners, a closet the size of a small a house. Complete with a dressing room, luxurious bathroom and plenty of storage for her every ensemble. Even without it being finished it was already a work of art, a sanctuary for any woman. She adorned herself in her future home, finally her own, relishing every inch of it, she already put in a work desk and spoke constantly of its ongoing renovations. About an hour later we were off to pick out curtains and look at some paint samples at a couple different boutique looking shops. Easily passing off as an ordinary couple for the day, they walked arm in arm strolling the streets of the Upper East Side. Except to me, still replaying the early afternoon's events, shaking my head over the echoed images in my mind, I followed behind just waiting to be needed again.

Over the course of the next few months was a constant influx of exorbitant excursions at Jeffrey's mansions, mainly to his island, to keep up with his ever-demanding sexual appetite with various young women and teenage girls. I got back on the Xanax, an old habit that I felt at the time would stop my memories from flowing back, rehabilitate my problems and relax me enough to deal with any situation at hand, no matter what the circumstance revealed itself to be. It was a drug that would blind my eyes to everything I should've been running from.

Having Brunel always in the picture these days wasn't helping me at all either. Sending his girls for Jeffrey at all of his places now and at a vigorous flow, they had an abundance of girls at their disposal. If I were to count one girl for everyday of the week, it would be the underestimated statement of the century. So many girls between the two of them, some nights it would be a free for all frenzy for Jeffrey and Brunel, seven or so girls giving them their upmost attention, doting on their every moan and whimper, Jeffrey being the main concern since Brunel worked for him and we were all aware of that too. If there were heaven on earth for men like Jeffrey, than he would be their God. Every one of his inner most desires was fulfilled when his harem of women was around. No wonder he didn't travel much abroad these days, all he ever wanted was right at his doorstep. I couldn't believe that he was still asking me to bring girls to him as well. There was never enough girls to

fill his appetite, so on occasion I would meet a pretty girl around my age and invite her back to his place to make some quick money by offering her a really good contact in the modeling and acting business. Keeping him satisfied and in need of me was a tiring job. With so much competition I had to be on the ball, seeming ambitious to grant him all of his desires. It was a lot of pressure and a spotlight of a role to undertake at such a young age but I told myself this is what my life's training had led me up to be.

My Birthday was around the corner and turning eighteen had lost all of its sparkle and pizzazz. There were no more surprises in store for me, nothing that would bedazzle me I hadn't done already. I spent my birthday on the island, having a quiet dinner and watching "Sex and the City" on the couch with Jeffrey, Ghislane and Emmy. There was no cake or a celebration of any sort but I did get a couple of presents that I opened outside underneath the main cabana. Jeffrey gave me a beautiful pair of sapphire and diamond encrusted earrings and Ghislane bought me another designer makeup case. I thanked the two of them with a tight squeeze and a gratuitous short spiel. As it went quiet, I looked out to the ocean and wondered if across these waters was there ever going to be happier days spent with someone special to me. Would he be kind, compassionate, and always be there when I needed him most? Or would I end up settling for my final bit of training, a marriage to a greedy old scrooge? Either way what I wanted most didn't matter right now, I was still bound by Jeffrey's hold over me and all I had to keep telling myself to get through this epic journey was, this is just the way it was for now.

Around the table for breakfast Jeffrey announced that he was expecting a few guests coming over with Brunel, no one of importance, just his usual entourage of beautiful girls. Russian models this time and Jeffrey was also having a photographer flown in to take modeling photos using the island as the perfect background for a sexy shoot. All of us girls were ushered onto rocks, hammocks, dug into sand and displayed just about anywhere they wanted. We were being photographed in next to nothing, like a netted fabric placed over us if the shot called for it, but the more provocative the more Jeffrey and Brunel loved it.

After the photo shoot we did some outdoor watersports. While us girls raced the jet skis around and jumped on the water trampoline, the men stayed on dry land to watch us from the beach. I was so used to this constant charade of girls and I didn't mind having a bit of fun but this was different, I had to be more than just polite because I already knew it wouldn't be long before we were all intimate with each other as well. Being the only girl that spoke English out of all of them was also a huge blunder. The only way we could communicate was through hand gestures and body language, a very primitive form of speaking, but what choice did we have?

I did my best to get acquainted and as I had previously assumed after lunch on the beach we were again ushered into another part of the island, Jeffrey's cabana. There was no need for words here, as the girls already knew exactly what to do. Without saying anything they undressed me and began to ravage my body with their hands, tongues, lips and fingers. I was delirious, never having done anything like this before with so many girls. It was sheer chaos; I don't honestly know how men could fantasize over this. Through the glimpses in between bodies crossing over me I could see Jeffrey and Brunel watching us, sitting in a chair with their hands around their penises, stroking themselves together "The best part is they don't even speak English so there's never a need to have to keep them amused" I could hear one of the men divulge and pretty sure it came from Jeffrey laughing out loud to Brunel. I just closed my eyes and went somewhere else in my mind until it was all over. That was that, life went on and we all moved on to eat dinner together.

It couldn't be more awkward as Jeffrey and Brunel were beside themselves with their ego's beaming, and the girls chatted like busy little chipmunks with each other. Ghislane and Emmy on the other end of the table were being amused at the entire racquet around the table and then there was me. Sitting quietly and smiling in people's direction when needed, I was counting down the minutes until I could go lay down in my giant comfortable bed, slipping away to the gentle noises the island created and sink comfortably into a deep sleep with the assistance of my Xanax. Scratching at the plate in front of me with my fork out of boredom, I wasn't even hungry. I had lost my appetite for food. Rather sipping on the champagne I wanted to feel as far away from here as possible. What seemed like hours for everyone to finish their meals we were finally all saying goodnight and goodbye to each other, as Brunel was off early in the morning and taking the eight beauties with him. "Thank God" I told myself, once was more than I could handle of that in one day.

It didn't take me long to get back into my own comfort zone. Heading straight back to my cabana after dessert was served nearly tripping over my own two feet as I tried to scuttle off in a hurry. As soon as I entered my domain, I drew a breath and sighed a deep exhale outwards, finally alone and at peace… for now at least. Although the sun had set hours ago the high temperatures of the Caribbean were still an affliction, plaguing my cabana I was welcomed by a rush of warm air as I opened the door. I hit the switch to the fan and stripped down for a shower. Preparing my towel and toiletries I opened the back door to the outside shower and placed them on the floor. Whether I was cleaning up in the midst of a hot

day or retiring for the evening, an outside shower was always splendid. Under a thick dark cloak of the night sky only the moon and stars to shed enough light for me to see my way around. I could feel the soft breeze lick the droplets falling off of my bodies' curves in the reflection of the moonlight. It only encouraged me to stay longer under the warmth from the spray of rushing water. I let the hot water run out before I was sufficed enough to go back inside. Lounging around the bed in my panties and a tank top I was still sweltering from the heat. Trying to tire myself out, I did some reading and eventually fell asleep. I needed those times to unwind after such an ordeal, letting the Xanax wash away all of the pain I could then forgive the mistakes I had made, blaming myself for staying around for this I had wished I was never born at all. The pills would take all of that away for me. My heart was a tangled weave of deception and pain, only reassured by the lies that were told to me and the lies I would have to convince myself of.

Chapter 16

When we flew back into Palm Beach, Juan drove me back to my apartment. Lonely for some companionship I decided to call an old friend. I was longing to be important to someone and unfortunately with such little time to have a social life of my own I was compelled to call T.J again. His Mom answered the phone and sounded quite surprised to hear my voice on the other end. She was always kind to me, I even used to bring her back "Cola" cans from other countries a bizarre hobby she loved collecting. She just didn't know what I saw in her son, even saying that to his face many times over. Not blind to his ways of cheating and stealing, being a personal victim of it, she made it apparent that she did not approve of T.J's choice in lifestyle. It used to really hurt him how his parents thought so badly of him, so he gave up trying to earn their love a long time ago. As long as he didn't steal from them anymore he was allowed to live there. Instead of that being a lesson to him, he would just try to be more clever in what he would steal, less obvious things. He would steal the toaster and sell it for five dollars if he knew it would help to get him his next high.

Nonetheless and at my expense I had a sweet spot for him. With enough water under the bridge, I was able to forget about the troubles he caused. His Mom told me she'd pass on the message when he got home, but that could be days from now. The last time he had been home was over a couple of weeks now. He only stopped by to get something to eat, have a long sleep and to beg her for a few bucks, supposedly to help him buy food. Then he was off again without a single word said, only leaving his parents to their own assumptions, which were pretty much correct anyways.

I then called around a couple of mutual friends to see if anyone had heard from him. Everyone I spoke to pointed their fingers in the same direction and the worst place possible, Ritchie's house. One of his best friends told me of how bad he was doing, "He's not the same guy anymore, and all he cares about is the next high he gets. If we don't get anything for him he just loses it and goes off somewhere." It was hard to hear how badly affected my best friend was and a part of me secretly hoped they weren't right. Still defending him, I told everyone I had spoke too while trying to find him that T.J would be fine, he's just probably going through a bad phase, like we all do sometimes and needs people to have his back more than ever now. I was pretty much laughed at on the spot, most people that I considered my friends at the time were only friends by association. As long as we all looked the part, acted the part, and could handle the part, only then did they want to be around us. The last person I called was the last person I had hoped he wasn't with and it turned out that everyone was right.

He was with one of the biggest Coke dealers in our area, Ritchie-Rich, as everyone used to call him. He didn't look like a typical strung out junkie or dealer. Instead he looked like your average preppy college grad with aspiring propositions. He dressed well and acted like a nice guy to imminent clients only to get them hooked on his drugs and then turns them out onto the streets. He was a businessman and his business was thriving. He carried everything from most drugs to guns and knives. Having ears in all places made him a dangerous acquaintance. Using kids off the local Palm Beach streets to run his dirty errands and the errands of the others above him, he made his money by using these teenagers, who as hard as it was to believe was once somebodies sweet child.

I knew T.J didn't have the finances to support himself or his drug habit so the likelihood of him being indebted to Ritchie in other ways was a safe assumption. Obtaining Ritchie's number from one of T.J's friends Marcus he asked me, "What do you want to call Ritchie for? Come over to my place and I can get you whatever you want" Marcus was a sleaze bag who would tirelessly continue to try to appeal to my lesser sense of judgment, never getting the hint or just not caring that I could never and would never be interested in him. "No Thanks Marcus, can I just get the number please, it's very important that I get ahold of T.J, I'm really worried about him." I hated having to call this guy let alone have to ask him for something. "Is this about the Adam bullshit? Cause if it is you can let him know what a fucking bitch he is for not showing up to be there for him, you can tell him from me that it's his fault and it should've been him that's lying in the morgue now, not Adam" I was totally thrown

by his allegations I could only mutter out a whisper "Did you just say that Adam is dead, what happened?" "Oh snaps, I thought you knew, where have you been girl, under a rock or something?" Marcus was less than sensitive about his statements. "He got shot in the head by two black guys who got suspicious when their usual supplier didn't show up, your boy T.J was so fucked up he didn't even remember to turn up at Ritchie's for the delivery, so Ritchie sent Adam alone and now he's dead." Adam was a sweet kid who just happened to be born living on the wrong block. Best friends with T.J since childhood, the two were inseparable until puberty hit and even then they would chase girls together. Adam followed in T.J's every footstep, mimicking his shadow, if T.J jumped off the Eifel Tower then so would Adam so when T.J got hooked on drugs consequently Adam did too, leading ultimately to his death. Wanting to end the conversation with Marcus quickly I scribbled down the phone number on a blank piece of paper in front of me and hung up the phone to call Ritchie's place immediately.

"Yeah?" It was Ritchie whom bluntly answered the phone after the first ring. "Hi –Uh- Rich, It's Jenna, T.J's ex, we met a couple of times at a few parties" I was trying to remind him of who I was knowing how paranoid he was about people having his number. "Oh yeah, I know who you are, what is it you want?" He answered with a dry tone. " I was hoping you could tell me where I could find T.J, I've heard some stuff and am really worried about him, is he alright?" Ritchie snickered at my concerns. "What are you his Mom or something? He's fine, he should be back here around five o'clock, I'll tell him you called." In the middle of me saying "Thanks and good-bye" he hung up the phone, as there is no room for manners in his line of work. I waited until five o'clock watching the minutes on the clock tick past and when five o'clock came and passed by with still no phone call, I couldn't deny to myself that I wasn't stricken with distress. Falling asleep wasn't easy either. I ended up crashing out on my sofa watching T.V, half expecting to hear of another murder on the news and it being T.J.

Forgetting to put on my eye mask before I went to bed, I was woken up the next morning by rays of the sun beaming into my living room. When I sleep I am a creature of darkness, avoiding any window light at all costs. Staggering to the coffee pot not used to getting up this early, my first thought that day was T.J and why he hadn't called. A million thoughts rushed through my head like a steam train…is he ok? Is he not calling because he is still mad from our last breakup? Has he moved on to someone else? Is he in any trouble? Did Ritchie even pass on my message? The thoughts were an endless infliction, consuming my entire day.

Until finally he called my cell phone later in the afternoon, relief swept over me when I heard his voice on the other end. "Thank God you called, I have been so worried about you, are you alright?" I jumped in without letting him get past saying "Hello". "Yeah, I'm fine. Ritchie told me you called his house looking for me yesterday and gave me shit for it saying you were upset or something, what's up?" I knew I would have to be delicate about asking what happened to Adam, thinking he'd be a mess over it. "I heard from Marcus that something happened to Adam and I got worried about you, what is going on?" T.J sounded scared, for what reasons were beyond my knowledge but I was going to find out, he replied " I don't want to talk about it over the phone. Are you in town so we can meet up or something?" It was obvious I wanted him to know that I was more than willing to lend my shoulder for his problems. "I'm home now if you want to come over whenever you feel like it." He didn't hesitate in taking me up on the offer. " But I won't be able to get there until later, I'm downtown at Ritchie's place unless you want to come pick me up."

It was more of a request than a favor to myself which is what he was making it out to sound like, knowing him all to well I didn't make a fuss of his ill-contemplated attributes. I got the address off him and made my way into the ugliness of the not so dazzling parts of the Palm Beaches downtown area. Rolling up my windows and locking the doors to my truck I nervously drove through the rough streets trying to find Ritchie's apartment complex. Knowing all too well the history of the area, it's not a place a lone white girl in a nice truck wants to be seen, many reports of the locals rushing up to a vehicles with a weapon demanding money, cars, or just angry and out to hurt someone. I was speeding through the streets wanting to get out of there as quick as I could. A sad world we live in with so much hurt everywhere you look and nobody wanting to do anything about it, just accepting the hopelessness of never being able to achieve anything more than what our civilization has succumbed to. Being among one of those people, we were similar in so many ways. Only separated by our own personal fears and the different direction they pulled us into.

I drove straight through the open gates at the entrance to the complex and parked on the gutter in front of Ritchie's block of units. A crowd of people stood outside the blocks I was entering. Being hit on and offered drugs simultaneously my cheeks went flush and I put my head down not saying a word. Walking up the corridors of the staircase looked like a scene out of a horror flick. Graffiti covered the peeling of green paint on the walls and the pungent stench of something rotting, only to the worst of my imagination, filled my nostrils. I could hear babies screaming

through the thin walls and trying to find the unit number was difficult from the sporadic flickering of the fluorescent lights above me.

At last I found Ritchie's one, quite astonished with myself that I even made it this far. I had to knock loudly on the door a few times before a young girl answered the door with eyeliner bleeding down from her eyes, her jet black hair was strung out and a mess and she looked off her face on some hard drug. She had only her bra and a short skirt on to cover her private areas and a cigarette hung out of her mouth to complete the full picture of terrible state she was in. She looked me down with contempt and snubbed at me "What do you want?" I maintained my politeness and told her T.J was expecting me. She opened the door and walked away, leaving me by myself to venture through looking for T.J.

Passing through the kitchen it looked like a hospital lab with syringes on the counter tops and medicine containers lying around everywhere. Minding my steps through the dirty house, I walked to the back to the living room and found T.J in a K-Hole strung out on a filthy couch. "Hey…there" he acknowledged me with a giant smile spread across his face. He probably didn't even know who I was from the dreadful state he was in. My first look at him in months and I was in utter shock. My jaw must have dropped to the floor at the very sight of him. Never seeing him so skinny and unhealthy looking I took pity and wanted to help him before things got even worse and he ended up like Adam, dead.

"T.J, hey buddy its Jenna, remember I was coming to pick you up today. You don't look so good, what are you doing so messed up?" I don't think he could even understand what I was even saying because he could only reply by giggling and rolling over, patting the couch as if it were a fluffy animal. I stood over him now and raised my voice so he'd know I was serious and snap out of it a bit. "Get Up T.J, Now!" I ushered at him to get off the couch, repeating myself a few times over and with no response I knew I had to get physical. Rolling him back over to face me again I smacked his face hard and I'm sure it stung but I got the reaction I had wanted. He sat up and looked at me confused.

At least now he was able to focus on my words requesting him to come with me. He was getting up from the couch and stumbling around before falling down to the floor again. Putting his arm around my neck and carrying the majority of his weight, I helped him up many times over and down three flights of stairs into my truck and drove him back to my place. It was a triumph on it's own arriving downstairs in one piece. Being the only person who really cared if T.J lived or died I felt like the responsibility of helping him was my concern alone.

Thankfully Jeffrey was in Palm Beach for the next couple weeks entertaining royalty, which gave me a little time to try and clean T.J up. I called a few of his friends that I knew and asked them not to score any drugs for him any more, pleading with them and telling all of them he was on the brink of death, reminding them of the friendship between us all that once existed before the drugs corrupted so many of us. Some of them laughed at me telling me I was wasting my time with T.J and others were nice enough to at least lie to my face politely and promise not to help him feed his addiction.

I just wanted to remedy all of his pain and problems but I felt so helpless fighting his battle against the streets. I bought some marijuana for him to smoke hoping to subside the withdrawals he was facing over the next few days but with no avail. The only thing that would help him was my Xanax, a few of those pills and he would go back to sleep, only waking up to get more of them. I would have to force him out of bed to have a shower once a day and make sure he ate something. He was more like a baby right now than he was a boyfriend, too much in need of something I couldn't give.

Chapter 17

When I went to see Jeffrey over the next course of days he picked out the dilemma I wore spread across my face straight away. "Your back with T.J aren't you" It was so funny that he knew me so well. "Yeah, he's in a real bad place in his life right now and needs my help." He looked astonished and replied, "You're a much better friend than I am, I know people like him and trust me they never change, no use in even trying" I believed him too knowing I was stupid for even attempting to change T.J, but my heart felt differently, he was still a human being and a good friend of mine just down at his worst. "That's what good friends are for" I laughed back at his remark, not wanting to take this conversation too much further. " I admire your loyalty at least, but take my word for it, he will hurt you again." His words were chilling but true, I had to find out for myself though.

Almost seeming like an actual friend for a second he ruined his brief momentary image by turning over from the unfinished massage that I was giving to him and acquired his sexual longings from my worn down soul. Not only did he know that I didn't want to endure any more demands tonight, but his energy enhanced from knowing it too. Looking up at him during the foreplay, it was an easy observation from the look in my eyes

that I hated every minute of it, seething through all of my duties until he climaxed.

Most days I could take this kind of treatment, it was only seldom I couldn't hold in the way Jeffrey disregarded my feelings. He had me just where he wanted me, like a pawn piece on a checkers board I was his own personal sex slave. For the remainder of the evening I stayed quiet, not sure of what to say after an episode like that. It was a vigorous display of how calumniating he could really be. He required me to clean up his spilled semen off of his genitals with a wet warm washcloth before he retired to his bedroom for a good night's sleep. Only a monstrous creep could sleep easy at night knowing what pain he caused others.

I went downstairs and asked Juan, who was still in the kitchen to pay me for the evening telling him that Jeffrey had gone to sleep for the night. It wasn't an unusual request. Juan would often have to fix up "the girls" after the sessions and sometimes even drive them home. He went to Jeffrey's desk and underneath was his duffel bag that always held insurmountable bundles of crisp hundred dollar bills. He took out two for me and handed them over. I thanked him and said goodnight, as I was always polite to Juan and his wife, Maria. His eyes were gentle and told me more than what he was allowed to say. I understood well. We all needed to eat and pay bills unfortunately even sometimes at our own moral expense.

Putting the keys into the ignition I started up the engine and reversed out of Jeffrey's driveway with promptness. I didn't want to be there a moment longer than I had to. Not much to look forward too getting back to my apartment either, I needed some time to filter my emotions. Parking my truck in front of a nearby beach I took my shoes off gradually stepping out of the door into the fog. I walked down to the edge of the sand where the water licked at my toes. My life was slipping away from me and I was really beginning to question the difference between living and dying. I was so tired of everything, my whole existence revolved around being everything to everyone, forgetting about being something for myself altogether. Pretending to be someone else became an attribute I was better than good at, probably much of why Jeffrey liked me in the first place. This time I held back my tears back and only let the anger fester into a deep pit in my stomach. My rage was aimed at the very people who abandoned me to fend for myself in the first place and accepted this life as normal for me, my parents.

When I got back to my apartment I was expecting to have to look after T.J, but to my surprise he had come around good that night. He greeted me at the door and asked how my evening was. "It was all fine" I easily lied. I never let anyone inside close enough to see my vulnerabilities. They were mine alone to battle. In my head they were too shameful to talk about anyways. He wanted to talk about something else anyways. Sitting me down at the dining room table he began his spiel. " I know you don't think much of me anymore, how could you? I'm a junkie who steals and sells drugs for a living, but I promise that's all going to change now. Adam is dead because of me and the only way I can make it up to him is to get away from it all. I promise things are going to get better." It was a convincing talk, but I knew him all too well. His demon inside yearned for him to fail but who was I to second-guess him out loud, I could only try to give him hope. "No one is perfect T.J. At least you're trying now and that's all that matters to me. I am so proud of you." I gave him a sincere hug and kissed him for the first time in a long time. "I love you," he said to me and I returned my love back. We slept in the same bed together that night and were officially back on together.

Two days later I was gone again, beckoned to be in Santa Fe. Ghislane only told me that I was to meet someone there, not sure of whom that was. It wasn't my place to ask questions. As far as I knew it could be anyone and I had no choice but to be compliant to their needs. It was the middle of the day when I arrived at the airport. One of the ranch hands came to pick me up in a big work truck that smelled like dirt and sweat but I didn't mind that's what I loved about the countryside.

When we arrived at the mansion my guest was already there waiting for me. I couldn't wipe the look off my face as he turned around from the bookshelf that he was standing at. "Hello" that same old cheesy grin greeted me once again. It was his highness Prince Andrew, and what a sight. He wrapped his arms around my waist and greeted me like an old friend. I hugged him back rolling my eyes at the same time, already dreading what lay in store over the next couple of days. My job was to entertain him endlessly, whether that meant having to bestow him my body during an erotic massage or simply take him horseback riding. For the next couple of days he was to be my only concern, but he wasn't. I called in checking on T.J a few times a day, not wanting to be a nag but just hoping he hadn't had any thoughts about relapsing. He was doing great, even applying for a couple jobs. Being reassured by him made my time away less complicated and thankfully with the help of my ever-ready Xanax I was able to cope with the ordeal.

The mansion was completely empty save a couple of maids who also cooked our dinners for us, and a couple bodyguards that we hardly even saw at all. The time dragged by slowly for me as I was counting down the hours until I flew away again, anywhere but here I thought. It wasn't easy meeting the sexual desires of these strange men, the Prince being one of them. He loved my feet and even licked in between my toes. Then there was the lack of passion in the intimacy we shared, to him I was just another girl and to me he was just another job. Not the right reasons to be together but I thought in this world and to these monsters, there didn't need to be a reason. To them it's nothing but a reenactment of their personal fantasies. To me it was a living nightmare.

Thankfully one of Jeffrey's assistants from New York called me on my cell phone early in the morning on the second day to fill me in on my next adventure. I had a flight booked for me to leave that afternoon to arrive at La Guardia airport in the evening. Even though I had to go back to yet another controlling man, I was still relieved. At least I was used to the confinements of Jeffrey's control and in some twisted way he was more comforting than these strangers he sent me to. Overlooking the city of New York as the plane landed felt like I was flying from one cage to another. Entrapped by falling victim to the predators that lured me into their enclosure. I didn't know how I would ever get out again. That deep pit in my stomach began to churn again, a physical reaction to the anxiety I was plagued with. Before getting off the plane I touched up my make-up to hide any signs of the frailty I was feeling.

Jo-Jo met me at the arrival terminal and picked up my luggage for me. He never said much at all, nodding to any reciprocating conversation. I don't think he could really speak that good of English anyways. It was better for me as I preferred the quietness for the moment. He opened the back door for me and we headed off for my next prison cell. When we got to Jeffrey's mansion on 72nd, the place looked empty. I walked up the staircase to Jeffrey's office and he wasn't there. Feeling a bit hungry I walked back down to where the kitchen was. I opened the fridge and found some leftovers that Adam, Jeffrey's chef, had cooked. I loved his cooking, when it wasn't filled with beansprouts and tofu. He used to make me the best pizza upon request, or whenever he was cooking seafood, which he knew I hated. He had an honest appeal about him and never even took notice when on many occasions us girls would be prancing around topless, sometimes even stark naked around the pool or beach. He would have to serve us our meals and would do it with such a casual professionalism, never making anyone uneasy at any occasion.

Half way through my meal the kitchen doors swung open and incoming was Jeffrey and Ghislane. Choking down my bite of food down, I got up from my seat and kissed them both on the cheeks. " Hi guys, how are you?" I greeted them and Ghislane answered for them both "Good, good. Sit down and finish your meal, don't let us interrupt you." I hated eating alone in front of people, chewing food and maintaining a conversation at the same time didn't give off the best look. "I was just finishing anyways, can I get you guys anything, maybe a tea or something?" Always playing my part, another reason to keep me around I guess, I went beyond the call of duty and after the last period with them, I had been reminded of my place. "Yes, I'll take a one" Ghislane stated. "Jeffrey how about you, anything I can get for you?" I asked again and he answered, "No thanks, we just ate and I'm still full" and they sat down together on the stools at the kitchen bench.

I got out the shiny red kettle from the cupboard, knowing my way all too well around the kitchen and put it over the hot stove plate. Turning around to face them, I thought they were acting peculiar. "So…"Ghislane started the conversation, "How was the ranch with the Prince?" It was a natural reaction for me to blush, knowing exactly what she was referring too. Keeping busy preparing her cup of tea and avoiding eye contact with both of them I started to unpack the counter where I had been eating, "I think he had a really good time, he seemed relaxed during the trip and when we said good-bye to each other he gave me a kiss." I went on to tell them what we did together "I took him horseback riding, nowhere to far just around the property, um… we went swimming in the pool, and of course I gave him plenty of massages. He had a massage at least couple times each day really seeming to enjoy his time there." It's what they wanted to hear, not the truth of how disgusting I had felt over the whole thing but they already knew the truth anyways, it's what they had trained me for in the first place.

Like two proud parents they both looked over me with such content. "Good, you did really well" Jeffrey complimented me. Turning around to the boiling kettle, I finished Ghislane's tea for her and the conversation led on to other subjects. We all ventured up to Jeffrey's office and out came the infamous duffle bag that went wherever he did. I was given close to a thousand dollars for my time in Santa Fe, more than what I thought anybody at my young age could make for a couple days of work. It was fulfilling the obscene vulgar needs of the so-called privileged that earned me so much.

Chapter 18

I spent the next few days in New York, venturing out to do some shopping therapy. I loved the eccentric parts of the city. Every street was different but the same energetic vibe filled all of them, animated with all different walks of life. Hanging out at coffee shops reading the newspaper or a good book was a favorite pastime while in the big apple. Being close enough to get back to Jeffrey for when he needed me but also far enough to get away from all of it. Most of the day slipped by without being missed and I made my way back to Jeffrey's.

Making one last pit stop, I walked into an old bookshop to browse at their assortment of old titles. I wasn't in any hurry so I took my time reading the backs of interesting looking books. I bumped into a girl looking down the same aisle I was down. "Sorry, I'm so clumsy" she was apologizing for my mistake. "No, no, it was my fault, I wasn't looking at where I was going. I get so wrapped up with my nose in a book and trip over my own two feet if I'm not careful enough." We were both giggling now and I further introduced myself to her. Her name was Valerie or Vickie or something like that, anyways she was a student at a school for hairdressing nearby. Chatting away both young and similar interests in each other's choice of reading we found it easy to speak with one another. She wasn't from around here only being in the city for the last two months, her parents hated her being here, but were also supportive in her big decision to move from the countryside in hopes of her accomplishing her own dreams. Aside from not having her near them, they just wanted her to be happy and supported in her big decision to move to the city, helping her pay some of the way.

She was a pretty girl with cherry red hair and soft white skin. Her long legs were emphasized by the short flowery dress that complimented her hourglass figure. She would definitely fit the pro quo for going down in one of Jeffrey's little black books. Only imagining the look on his face upon meeting her I could already see his sly grin spread from ear to ear. Knowing exactly what he would do with her and the very thought of him tarnishing a sweet country girl such as her just couldn't be done. It was the beginning of a turning point in my life that started with realizing I had a choice at hand and the effect I could have on one person alone. "I must be off, but it was really nice to meet you." Bidding her goodnight and paying for my books I turned around with one last glance over my shoulder and said. "Good luck in the city!" Leaving that bookshop was a small step in a growing abundance of larger strides to come. Turning the corner onto 72nd street I had an undeniable feeling in the pit of my stomach again but this time it wasn't the familiar hurl of anxiety I was used too after I had done something I had wrong that I had regretted, it was a new feeling of pride and inner strength. I quite liked it a lot, I held my head high and smiled on the inside when Jeffrey asked me how my day was and what I got up to, not mentioning I had let one girl slip on bye.

The icy winter winds faded away making way for the approaching sunny days that blossomed the colorful shades of spring. This was my favorite time of the year. Making the most use of his island we spent countless days of the increasingly hot days there. A constant array of visiting guests and plentiful young women to flock around keeping them entertained was the typical lazy afternoon on Little St. Jeff's. We ate, drank, and played under the blue blanket of cloudless skies. To many this lifestyle could seem idyllic, unless you were like me, the one on the other side of the fence where the grass wasn't so green. Fortunately for me and in some ways not, I was mostly expected to attend to only Jeffrey's insurmountable of sexual desires. Whereas the other girls who came one day and went the next were promised a multitude of open doors just for there meager participation in sexual acts with random men, only to be disappointed when they realized they were nothing more than a single night out for these geriatric senior citizens who most likely due Alzheimer's would sooner forget the entire experience let alone their first name.

Surrounded by those in our world who many looked up too but not seeing them from where I was standing, I didn't have the highest of standards in humanity. Then I met Al Gore and his lovely wife during one of those many weekends away in the Caribbean. I was blown away by the amount of attention Al doted on his wife, it was so sweet to watch. They sat next to each other at the dinner table gazing into one another's eyes having an intimate conversation between them. Among the many guests visiting that night and many of them young beautiful women, not once did Al's eye's stray elsewhere, to them they were the only ones there. He was up for a presidential election that year and he definitely had my vote. Anyone that could show that much devotion and passion towards his loved ones could have the same devotion towards running a country, or at least I thought so. He only left his wife's side to have a walk down to the beach with the host of the weekend, Jeffrey. The weather was still warm in the evening when I decided to break away from the idle chat around the table and take a stroll too.

Not wanting to interrupt the conversation between Jeffrey and Al, I walked in the opposite direction plucking the washed up sea shells imbedded in the sand along the way. I enjoyed the serenity in the solitude of the island. So many nooks and crannies to get lost in, I could imagine that I actually disappeared from the entire world for a moment. By the time I came back to the main house majority of the small crowd had been long gone retired to their cabanas. Even Jeffrey had gone off to bed but trust party animal Ghislane to still be up entertaining the remaining guests left at the table, regaling her wild stories of people and places she has embarked on. Trying not to make eye contact as I walked past them on my way back to my cabana carrying my seashells inside my curled up blouse, I wasn't up for anymore pointless talking tonight. Emptying out my seashells into a plastic bag, I went over my new treasures one by one. I loved collecting odd things, shells being one of my favorites.

Ghislane and I shared that interest together. We would enjoy walk abouts around the island searching for lost pieces of the remnants that pirate's had left behind centuries ago. It was mostly broken plates or smashed glass from bottles of ale, and even occasionally getting lucky enough to find some old coins here and there. It wasn't easy though, both loving a challenge it was perfect for us. Enduring many scratches from the bushes we would be searching through and then the soar arms from digging all day, but it was worth it in the end. After nearly two years of collecting items and saving them, we made Jeffrey a mosaic table out of the remaining pieces left from the era of the pirate's day. Upon completing it we were both astounded in our creation, it was such an item of rarity and an interesting piece of work. When we presented it to Jeffrey he was even impressed not only in our amazing finds but what we did with them. The table became an important work of art that Jeffrey showed off inside the main house's lounge room, sparking a much intrigue and table conversation by many of the visiting guests to his island.

The next morning was good-bye for most of the visitors, leaving just the usual behind. Soaking in the sun and living it up in the lap of luxury is how the next few weeks were spent before having to get back to the dredge of the city. Sometimes we'd have to go to St. Johns island for Jeffrey to do some work in the office. It was so boring for me to sit in their listening to him on the phone or coming down on some poor employee for something stupid like not answering the phone correctly. If I knew he was going to be awhile I would excuse myself for a bit of shopping. Not that the Caribbean had much to offer in the world of fashion but there was never an amount of bikinis one girl could own and I loved all the little knick knacks one could find there. Flying back on a private jet was the best part because I could transport just about anything I wanted back to my apartment, which was already filled with an assortment from my shopping ventures and collection of seashells from the Caribbean.

The next big dinner party on the island had another significant guest appearance being, the one and only, Bill Clinton. He is the only president in the world to be dismissed from his role as a world leader because he was caught with his trousers around his ankles and had the stain to prove it. Publicly humiliating his wife and himself he retired from his title but not from his lifestyle. This wasn't a big party as such, only a few of us eating at the diner table. There was Jeffrey at the head of it all, as always. On the left side was Emmy, Ghislane and I. Sitting across the table from us was Bill with two lovely girls who were visiting from New York. Bill's wife, Hillary's absence from the night made it easy for his apparent provocative cheeky side to come out. Teasing the girls on either side of him with playful pokes and brassy comments, there was no modesty between any of them. We all finished our meals and scattered in our own different directions.

Jeffrey wanted his evening massage before bed and Ghislane and Emmy went to their office to talk about something, leaving our guest of honor to find company elsewhere. Strolling into the darkness with two beautiful girls around either arm, Bill seemed content to retire for the evening. He wanted to have a hot bath before bed while I began the massage in the tub. Starting with his feet and calves, he wanted to end the night quickly. Never showing any restraint he sat up on the edge of the tub and asked me to preform on him orally. I did my job, but that's all our relationship was these days, a dreadful job. Getting it over and done with as quick as possible was my hope but I couldn't let him pick up on those vibes, to make him enticed I had to act like his little porn star, knowing exactly how he wanted it. Only then would my duties be fulfilled and I would be able to get back the reality of my complicated life. Before I could say goodnight, Jeffrey had one more request. He wanted me to tuck him under the blankets and fluff his pillows for him. Then I had to reach under the covers and massage his feet while watching him fall asleep, he even wanted me to wait like twenty minutes or so after he fell asleep before I could leave. It wasn't unusual for him to ask it but God I hated it, never offering it I would always wait for him to request it. Once he was snoring gently I wiped my hands clean of the lotion and quietly closed the doors to his room. Making my way up the outdoor spiraling staircase, I felt the breeze blow through my hair and looked up to the heavens. The stars shown so bright out here in the middle of nowhere with no big city lights to hinder their effect I could get lost in time staring into them. No matter how far gone I really felt there was always something about a simple caress from the wind or the reflection of the star sweeping sky in the black glossy ocean that would always remind me of my fond love of nature's blessings.

Back in New York, there was nothing left of nature to adorn. It was a dwelling for those who no longer saw the use for trees without cages or blue skies without clouds of man made fumes and gases. Unfortunately if we weren't in the Caribbean, we were there in New York. Hardly going back to Palm Beach, barely even seeing my family, my dog or T.J these days at all. In my parents heads I was all grown up and educated in the world of wealth not needing them any longer they would just wait for my call once in a while to let them know how I was doing and that was the extent to our restricted relationship. The road my life has led down never has kept me close to home anyways so to me it wasn't anything unordinary but still a sad existence to be without a family of my own. It would've been nice to be missed though, rarely letting myself think like that. No room for pity in my heart, if I did, the floodgates could open and I'd have enough grief in one lifetime to go around a few times that they would've never been closed.

Jeffrey's business was running well from the looks of his attentiveness the office he owned in the Upper East Side of Manhattan. Alan Dershowitz, his colleague in finances and personal solicitor, a bird of the same feather, I had seen hanging around the island and Jeffrey's Manhattan mansion, more and more these days. Alan's taste for the young and beautiful was a bias for a blooming business relationship between him and Jeffrey. After an explicit session of Jeffrey's vulgar pilgrimage into my body, we were interrupted by a knock at the door by Jeffrey's good friend, Alan. I wrapped myself up in Jeffrey's pink bed sheets, which is the color preference he chose to sleep in because it reminded him of the same color of his own words "Pussy", and covered my face from the unexpected intrusion. Jeffrey got up and wrapped a towel around his loins and answered the door completely calm. Opening the bedroom door and letting Alan inside they began to converse about business immediately, right in front of me. Jeffrey started to tell Alan what needed to be done while he jostled some notes down quickly. I peeked my head from underneath the covers thinking they were too wrapped up in their work to notice me get up and dressed, and Jeffrey turned back to me and told me to just stay there this would only take a second. Going back to Alan he turned his focus back into work and hustled out a few more orders before letting Alan out of the door and returning his attention to me.

"Sorry about that, work never stops and neither will the money coming in. How else am I going to make a million dollars while I'm sleeping?" Jeffrey chuckled as he sat back down on the bed next to me. I laughed at his humorous and mostly true statement, then a strand of hair fell in front of my face. Before I could get to it he put it back behind my ears and sweetly stroked my face, for a moment we just looked into each other's eyes and he nearly seemed almost human to me. It was bizarre how he could be so kind and gentle one moment and the second beforehand I was being treated like no more than a common plaything left out for display. Nothing more than an ego trip, Jeffrey got off on letting the ones he wanted to know that he could own anything and anyone he wanted in this world. Maybe for a brief minute I believed the sincerity behind his eyes but that vision would quickly fade away and I would be left second-guessing why I even fell for his deceitful tricks for a moment.

Jeffrey got up from the bed and asked me to join him for a shower. In his bedroom, which was the entire top floor, he had a glass shower enclosed underneath a glass skylight right in the middle of the room. It was perfectly accessible feature for a man that loved both being clean and nude, but still an odd feature at that. As I always did whenever I showered with him, I lathered a loofa with soapsuds and would scrub his body, up and down, in between his toes, even behind his ears and of course his genitals area. The sunlight shown through the glass ceilings into where we were standing, making the moment feel even more surreal on top of the already popped Xanax I had popped before for breakfast earlier that morning. Jeffrey was in such a lighthearted mood that day, making funny cracks at me, and acting like a flirt. When I was finished washing him he actually wanted to wash me too, which was another totally out of his character suggestion.

For the rest of the day, he took me everywhere with him, the office and then to a friends place, even just wanting to hang out with me for a while. I wasn't used to being treated like anything more than a dog on a leash, when he acted like this it just completely spun me around confusing me even more.

We were spending heaps of time together these days, a lot more than usual. At the ranch we would do things together, alone, and not just the usual perverted things I was accustomed to doing with him alone. Horseback riding on his ranch during weekends away by ourselves and movie nights snuggling up over a bucket of popcorn instead of having to massage his feet during the entire film became his way to alter my perception of my original notion that I wasn't just his sex slave, I thought I was finally becoming his friend.

When we went quad biking he no longer wanted me to take my own bike, he preferred me to sit on the back of his, holding onto him tightly and he even tried to teach me how to drive a manual stick shift car. He was definitely trying to show a softer side of himself, different to the stone cold slave driver I had to come to respect out of fear over the many years. Still a hard image to change after all I had been through and seen over the years I had been with him. Nonetheless he was still my "boss" so I humored his attempts and matched his caring demeanor, giving him the impression I was intrigued in our new kind of affair.

Chapter 19

His attentiveness led into the warmer months that commenced the beginning of long summer days that I looked forward too. I couldn't help but enjoy his eagerness to see me more relaxed these days. He wasn't even bothering me to find alternate sources of girls for his twisted satisfaction anymore and although I was still being used for his distorted sexual enjoyments he further seduced me into believing I meant a lot more to him than I ever did.

It all came to a sudden conclusion one sunny afternoon in the Caribbean. Jeffrey pulled himself up to the ladders first step and climbed up the next four steps to the top of the dock. His chest was heaving rapidly as he sat down catching his breath. Ghislane was the next one up and then I followed lastly behind them. To me it was an invigorating snorkel around the shallow reefs within the radius of the dock, but to Jeffrey the half an hour swim in the ocean was enough to overexert his ageing limbs. I took off my snorkel gear and placed it in the storage bench, grabbing us a few towels at the same time. Wrapping a towel around Jeffrey's backside and handing one to Ghislane, I sat down next to them on the dock and we laughed how fatigued Jeffrey was, poking fun that he really is getting older. A very touchy subject for the vain at heart but he didn't seem to mind it, probably knowing we'd never take the joke too far. We sat there in silence for a moment, an odd silence at that. Jeffrey looked at Ghislane and then Ghislane looked at me, placing me once again in the spotlight. They both scooted closer to where I was sitting and I felt something stirring in the air. The biggest turning point of events in all of my time spent with them.

Jeffrey sat next to me and put his hand on my back and looked at me with a certain kind of sincerity I hadn't seen in him before. "I want to first of all tell you that over the last few years you have shown me the kind of devotion and loyalty that I believe is rare to find among people these days, qualities I hold that high in regard." Bewildered by the whole scenario I just nodded every time he paused, trying to grasp what his intentions were getting at. He continued to praise my nature saying " I hope you know my appreciation for your embracing of my lifestyle, you have been achieving a name for yourself among the friends I have introduced you to. Everybody says basically the same thing about you, the same thing I believe. You are a delightfully funny girl who has developed into a mature graceful young woman and I could think of nobody else I'd rather have a child than with than you."

And just like that he created a whole new dilemma for me to face. In utter shock from the completely unexpected proposition and before I could even think of anything to respond with, Ghislane made the finishing touches with the business end of the deal starting with the pros before the cons "You would have around the clock nannies to help you. Jeffrey would pay for a mansion of your choice in either Palm Beach or New York" and as if the drumrolls were beckoning " and… you would have a hefty monthly allowance from Jeffrey's bank account" Astonished at their first offers I nearly took the bait. Then she continued to finish the terms of our pre-agreement with "But you would have to travel with the child where and when Jeffrey wanted you to be, and most importantly you would have to sign a contract stating that Jeffrey and you are not monogamous and that the child would belong in Jeffrey's custody in the event of a falling out between the two of you." She kind of threw that last one in there quickly, as if she could get away with me not hearing that I would basically have to relinquish the rights to my own flesh in blood and surrender them to a life of servitude and abuse with these people. My maternal alarm bells went off straight away and I already knew my answer. No way I could I do that to any poor baby, God only knew what these monsters had in store for me let alone a baby, but it was an instant reaction that saved me. " I don't know guy's, I mean I'm really young and never really even thought about having kids yet. Wow, I just don't know." I slicked my hand through my hair nervously and took in a silent breath. I had to go beyond what I was truly feeling and give them the feeling that I'd never let them down. Putting an eager smile on my face and sucking up my gut's intuition I told them "You know what, let me get my certificates in massage and have some time to prepare for this and get healthy then next year we'll all think about having a baby together." It was crazy to even hear me say out loud but from the expressions on their faces I had fulfilled their wishes.

Much reason to celebrate that night they were both in a cheery mood around the dinner table. Except for me who had taken double the dosage of Xanax to even cope with the high amounts of anxiety I had been suffering from since we got back from the dock. I wasn't sipping the champagne that night, I was gulping it and when their moods turned from cheery to raunchy later that evening it wasn't hard for me to comply. From the full effects of the state I was in I would've agreed to just about anything, allowing them to treat themselves to ravishing the tender parts of my body.

Over the next few weeks everything went on as it normally would, and not another mention of their proposal. My birthday was only a week away and I was turning nineteen that year. All I wanted was to get my certificates before I got any older and get trapped into this life for good. When my big day rolled around I was in New York with Jeffrey and Ghislane. Sitting on my bed listening to MTV's channel blare in the background of my room I was painting my toenails when I was suddenly buzzed on the intercom. It was Jeffrey calling himself to ask me to meet him in his office in ten minutes. Perfect timing to let my nails dry I thought to myself. Already contemplating his desire to come downstairs I knew it had something to do with my birthday present but I was more expecting the usual shopping money or piece of jewelry, definitely not what he had in store for me.

I knocked on the slightly ajar door to Jeffrey's office and heard him beckon me inside. "Hello, what cha up too?" I asked in a cutesy tone of voice. Walking over to his desk he looked up at me taking his reading

glasses off while granting me a big smile. "Come over here and sit down with me" as he ushered me to come sit on his lap. Pulling me onto him he had a funny look on his face, like he had something really big to tell me and was letting the anticipation build in the thickness of the silence. "What???" I laughed at the way he was looking at me now. "First of all...Happy birthday today." Was only the beginning of his announcement and he proceeded to tell me "I know how much you have wanted this for so long and you are more than deserving of it. You are going away to Thailand to learn authentic Thai Massage and within eight weeks you'll receive a certificate for being a qualified Thai Massage Therapist." Astonished at his attempts to see me get what I wanted, not exactly the type of massage I was interested in but it was a start and a first certificate for me to acquire. My eyes lit up and I threw my arms around his neck, planting a big kiss on his lips, which I rarely ever did.

"Wow, I don't know what to say, this is beyond my wildest dreams...thank you so much!" I did well to let him know I appreciated his grandeur offer. He went on to give me the details of where I'd be staying, the school's schedules, and how much he loved Thai massage, apparently it was the next big thing to hit the shores of America. He had planned out an entire itinerary for me. I was to depart at the end of August and he had already enrolled me in a class at "ITM Massage School". I would only have a few days to settle in before I would be attending classes five days a week over eight hours a day. He even had an assignment for me to do while I was over there. I was to meet up with a girl who was also being put up at the "Princess Hotel" where I was staying. She had an Asian sounding name so I just assumed she was a local girl hoping for an opportunity of a lifetime, if she only knew what she would be getting herself into. If I decided that she met Jeffrey's particular quota of approval then she would be sent over to the U.S to meet with him or one of his esteemed colleagues. Besides the guilt of having to decide a stranger's uncertain fate, everything else sounded more than wonderful. Eight weeks gone from Jeffrey sounded like a lifetime away and I couldn't be more excited at this chance. It was the opportunity of my lifetime and I wasn't going to waste a second of it.

Ghislane came in a few minutes later and the look on her face told me she already knew. I got up from Jeffrey's lap and gave her a big hug and told her, "This is so nice of you guys, Thank you so much!" She didn't share my enthusiasm of excitement. In a dull tone she responded, "I didn't have a thing to do with it, it was all Jeffrey's idea but good-luck anyways." She gave me her best impression of being human for a brief second and hugged me back. It was just her way and I had come to accept it. Depending on the level of slander her insults provoked was just her way of telling you she cares without really ever showing it. Probably doesn't make sense to most sane people but after all of the time spent with them, I had gotten to understand a few of their quirky ways. Even if I didn't agree with them, they knew I would for their sake of opinion. What did it matter anyways I thought, I had been degraded in every other physical way what's the difference from taking their mental abuse too. Not the exact choice of employers I would've chosen over again if given the opportunity but here I was and doing my very best to excel at their demands.

I was sent home for a little over a week to pack for the long trip and make the rounds visiting my family before I left overseas on my first trip all by myself. It was great to see my family after such a long time away. My older brother and his wife even came down to visit for the well wishing of my departure. Everyone in my family seemed stoked at the prospects my long journey had led me down. Here I was jet setting around the world in my teens and getting paid to study the course of my dreams at a cost that I only knew I would have to pay. It was a wonderful get together with all of them around, a great way to remember them. If I'd only known it would be the last time I would see any of them I would've emphasized to my brothers how much I really loved them both and how much I would miss them in the decade to come! But I didn't know what my future held for me, I had nothing planned out I was just hoping for the right opportunities.

I also had a few good friends to catch up with before I went. Every night was another party and by the end of the week I had drunken enough to drown an Irishman on St. Patty's Day. I was given the lists to all of my friends email address and told to keep in touch. Yeah right I thought, I was going to be too busy having too much fun to be thinking about sitting on a computer emailing people, but I told them I would anyways. Save myself the point of having to explain that in many different ways to a group of already tipsy slurring teenagers. Out of everyone who was really happy for me, T.J wasn't. He hated the idea of me leaving him to have a non-stop party in Thailand without him. He was just starting to seem like he was coming good and I didn't like having to leave him at such a vulnerable state but in my young years I had already realized I needed to do some things for myself and this was one of them. There was still a huge amount of broken trust between us, trust that could probably never be rendered again so I thought I was being decent enough letting him stay at my apartment while I was gone, but he was not to drive my truck, at all. I paid too much money on insurance for that thing and knowing his driving record I didn't want the risk of something happening while I was gone for so long. He didn't agree with me at all, throwing a grown up tantrum all over my apartment. Hitting the walls and doors, shouting the entire complex down, there was nothing I could say or do at this point in

time so I just put my dog on the lead and took her for a walk to calm down the situation and give me some time to be alone. Mary Jane was the only one I hated leaving behind. When we got back from the long walk she barricaded my suitcase while I was packing the horrendous amount of clothing that I always did. I was promising her I wouldn't be long and told her how much I loved her giving her a big hug. I choked back on the tears that were swelling up in my eyes, it was like she already knew the night before I flew out to New York that this would be my final trip.

There was a commercial flight booked for me in the morning and I needed the rest that night to fully recover from my binge of celebration drinking. T.J crept into bed later that night and tried to redeem his behavior with sweet nothings and dry humping my backside. It did nothing for me sexually. I didn't feel like that for him any longer and the sooner he realized that, the better he'd be off. I told him I wasn't up for it and he picked up a pillow and slammed the door behind him. It didn't matter I told myself, the next day I was off and wouldn't have to deal with him or anyone.

T.J caught a cab with me to MIA, the airport in Miami. He walked with me to the furthest point he was allowed to go by the security gates and as we stood in line together it was almost heartbreaking seeing him cry. I told him I'd try to call him everyday, attempting to give him optimistic ways to look at this time away from each other. In the end he had me crying and I had to give into my remaining feelings I had for him. One last kiss under the x-ray bridge and he vanished out of my sight as I furthered down the terminals long hall.

Chapter 20

It was only a short flight to New York and I just couldn't wait until next week when I'd be jetting of to an exotic destination all by my lonesome self. It was all I could think about talk about and dream about, finally my break. Ghislane did what she did best that week and prepped me for everything I could imagine under the sun. Do's and Don'ts, emergency numbers and western union locations were among some things on the list she gave me. Like I said, she showed her caring side in other ways. There was also the name of the girl I was supposed to be meeting, the room she was in and what dates she would be staying there.

When I got out of Ghislane's office I was instructed to meet Jeffrey in his office. She had to stay back for some paper work that she had to catch up on pronto. Making my way up the red and gold trimmed carpeted staircase I prepared myself for some major sucking up before I left, he would be expecting it for his recent generosity, or so I had thought. Opening those familiar heavy doors the first thing I saw was an unfamiliar face standing over Jeffrey's shoulder.

She was a tall girl with blonde hair twisted up in a professional looking knot. Her big smile was flashing at him with hints of her cheekiness to come and she was dressed to kill with a short tight grey skirt and a matching suit jacket over her white buttoned down blouse, revealing her voluptuous ample cleavage. She looked like the old college professor's wet dream. When she introduced herself to me, a thick Czech accent presented itself. Her name was Nadia Marcinkova and Jeffrey looked just about as smitten as a victim of a love struck arrow from no one but the cupids themselves. Jeffrey further introduced her as his new assistant and masseuse while I would be away, barely taking his eyes off her for one second. It was a bit of a blow to take, being so easily replaced but also a part of me already knew this was expected off someone like him. Good for him I thought to myself, why should I have bitterness over someone I never had intimate feelings for and knew had never really cared for me in the first place. Kissing her on the cheeks and telling her my name, I was doing my best to grin and bear it. We hugged for a brief show of uniformity but it was just that, a show for Jeffrey to see. When he was away for the moment or she wasn't busy hanging off his every word, the way we all started out, she would snub me off to only head off in another direction. A real bitch if anyone was to ask me but no one would anyways it wasn't my job to like her.

Over the next course of days it was my task to show her some of my techniques in massaging Jeffrey and the erotic side of finishing it off. Nadia despised me even more when Jeffrey told her to follow my lead during the massage as she tried to take over and do her own thing a few times. To me it was quite funny her competitive side, I had nothing more to prove so watching her put on an act of seduction and scream out her every body function during a faked orgasm was nothing but entertaining in my eyes. After a few sessions together it was my time to be off on another adventure far, far away from here or from the chains that I wore for way too long. Jeffrey had someone else to fit the chains that kept me so close to him. Even though she wasn't the nicest of girls I still couldn't help but feel sorry for her. No girl should belong to someone out of servitude, but unfortunately it is the way our civilization has been for many centuries before us and I don't see changing any time soon or as long as perverts like Jeffrey are allowed to walk around freely and procure our daughters off the streets all because he's got a lot of money to pay many, many, many people off.

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Throw out your confetti because here I come Chang-Mai!! My celebrations started the second I landed, it didn't take me long to make myself aquatinted with a few fellow travelers and find the hot spots of the hustling city. It was like nowhere I had ever been before. The streets were lined with stalls offering an assortment of souvenirs, clothing, and knick-knacks. Everyone lived so freely and was in such great spirits. The parties raged on until the wee hours of the morning and people became best friends over night. From the second I got there I knew Thailand was going to be a lot of fun and I was right! Popping bottles of champagne, dancing all night to the beat of every club's rhythm's along my way and carrying on like it was my birthday…every night was a repetition I could definitely get used too. During the day I was a real good girl, the teachers pet even. Showing the credibility of my experience in massage from over the last few years and already ahead of the class the teacher was using me to help instruct the others with demonstrations. Mostly in a class full of males it wasn't a surprise that I made friends with quite a few of them, some of them with ulterior motives, but for the most part the sleazebags were none of my concern, I had already dealt with a lifetime of them to be able to spot one out and steer clear of his approaches. Out of the entire class I had made friends with only one girl from Wisconsin. She was a plain looking girl with big brown puppy dog eyes and a long drawn out accent. Her first time leaving the States or Wisconsin itself for that matter so it was easy to acknowledge that she was a little taken aback by all of the bustling city life so becoming her friend felt like I was doing a good deed showing her around the hot spots of the Chaing-Mai nightlife. Eventually I even ended up inviting her to stay with me at my hotel. She was running out of money to party every night then pay for school on top of her accommodation, it was all becoming too much out of her small budget. So I thought about it and offered her a bed in my room, I had two of them anyways. Plus she was a really nice girl and if I could help make her first time out of the country an unforgettable experience then I was also gaining something from it as well.

The first month in quickly passed me by. Having such an incredible time on my own and putting my heart into learning Thai Massage it seemed to just fly past. Routinely I had to call in and check in with Jeffrey and Ghislane letting them know my whereabouts and progression in class. Counting down the time left until my course finished Jeffrey was anticipating my departure back to New York. "I can't wait to get my first Thai massage from you. I've got you booked to come straight back to New York for my first one as soon as your course finishes next month." His eagerness put a twisted familiar knot in my stomach. Reminding me of the dream I have to awake from soon and the reality of the certain homecoming I would be arriving to. " It's such a great course, thank you

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so much for sending me here to learn this. You are going to love my new area of expertise! I am having such an amazing time over here!!" I had to let him know how much I appreciated what he had done for me and he loved the head swell that it would make him feel as well. Hating the thought of going back to him, I wasn't going to let that put a damper on my spirits while I was still out there. It was my time to party harder than ever before. Every night was a new adventure for me. Chang-Mai was a maze of places to get lost in and the vibrant city was my playground. The way I saw it this was my last chance to get out and break free, letting loose my inner girl it felt so good to take the lead of my own life.

Chapter 21

It was an average evening getting ready in front of the bathroom mirror on just an average Sunday, though unbeknownst to us girls as we sat there chatting away carelessly, this night was already written in the stars for me. It was a very long time ago now when I was still a young child that I sat looking up to those same stars from my bedroom window with my hands pressed tightly together as I cried for God to hear my prayers. All I asked him for was death. My precious life was already such a hopeless battle that I felt too small to fight alone for. Begging him to deliver me from this cruel world I would pray for all of my pain would to away for good. My only clause in my prayers was the possibility that there was somebody in this wide world that I was meant to love, something much bigger than I could have even imagined yet. This invocation of mine was forgotten about long ago now, until tonight.

I wish I had known that night I sat crying beneath the stars that it would all be different one day and that I hadn't sold myself short to the accustomed lifestyle I was brought up to believing was acceptable. It was this night my very soul was about to cosmically collide with the man I was always meant for, the man my heart already belonged to and would know from the instant we met. This night would be the first day to the beginning of my new life to come.

I blushed my cheeks and put on my mascara before me and my girlfriend headed out to hit the town. We were dressed to kill and looking for something to do when we ran into a few of our class mates at one of our favorite drinking spots. They were meeting up for some drinks before a Muay-Thai kickboxing tournament. It sounded like fun when they invited us along to watch it with them. The massive crowd lined the street where the fight was being held and once I got inside the arena it was push and shove to try to find a spot to watch from. The friends that we were hanging out with were meeting up with another group of guys that were training for the kickboxing tournaments that we were watching.

Then it happened it was the first moment I laid eyes on the man that would love me for the rest of my life. I wasn't expecting the most amazing time of my life to happen right there and then but it did and I would never be the same again. Destiny fell right smack into my lap and there was no stopping it! It wasn't just his smoldering appeal that was obvious at first sight it was the entire package of mannerism and chivalry that made him stand out of the crowd. Stepping right out of the pages of the fairytales I used to read, he was nothing like I had ever come to know before.

Watching him from a close distance he was playfully shadow boxing one of the guys from my massage class and it was at that moment that this handsome stranger first caught me staring at him. From top to toe this athletically built man was intriguing to watch, I couldn't take my eyes off him like I was magnetically drawn to his power of attraction. He further interested me when he wasn't acting like the majority of harping dogs that would jump at the eyes I was giving him now. Instead he coyly played hard to get, making me work for any conversation with him. The fight started and the men were going bezerk, screaming at the fighters in the ring offering either fighter their support or discrimination depending on whom they were batting for. It was like watching a primitive scene out of the days when the cavemen ruled the earth but it was as equally alluring to watch unfold, the sweat, the blood and the absolute brut fascination of it all.

After the fight and all of the men revved up from the fight, I suggested that we all head to the pizza joint in front of the Princess Hotel where I was staying for a late night snack. I made it my goal to make myself known to this appealing stranger. In the tuk-tuk on the way there I made sure I sat next to Robbie. Scooting my knees closer and closer to him on the short ride he continued his chase by moving further away from me, a game of cat and mouse that I loved. When he answered back the array of my questions he had the cutest Aussie accent that drove me absolutely wild.

Gradually we got to know each other better over a pie of peperoni pizza and two can's of coke. Too me he might as well have been the only other person in the restaurant, he knew he had my undivided attention and I think he liked it. There was no one like him that I had ever met before and I knew there was no other who could make me feel the way that I felt at the first sight of him. Being charming and suave was all an accidental front. It was easy to read him. Immediately it wasn't hard to see his sweet side, holding the door and pulling out my chair at the restaurant, I was already smitten. After pizza he walked me across the street to my hotel where we made plans to meet up again. There was no kiss goodnight or anything like that. No, he was too polite for that, he wanted to prove himself different and different he was. Walking through the hotel's revolving doors I watched as he walked away and when he was finally out of sight, I sung my way up to my room. Floating on cloud nine I was free falling into a deep pit of love.

The next day I attended my class as usual but not able to concentrate like I normally did, too excited about when I'd be seeing Robbie that night again. As I walked out of class that afternoon even the teacher noticed a difference in my performance and asked me if I was feeling well, "On top of the world actually" I smiled back at the old instructor and it wasn't far from the exact truth either. I hadn't ever felt the churning of butterflies in my stomach and the constant thoughts of anyone else like this before. My girlfriend and I got a tuk-tuk back together as we usually did after school and I couldn't shut up about the night before. She was laughing at my girlishness telling me that anyone who just met me would think I had never been let out before, but little did she know that I had more than my fair share in experience with men and never had I ever come across anyone that could make me feel this way, and what spun me out even more was that it was such an instant attraction. Never considering myself a person who believed in the existence of "Love at first sight", but a true romantic deep at heart, I couldn't help but believe in it now. He is my walking proof of it!

Waiting for me in the hotel lobby was the very person I couldn't stop entertaining the thought of all day long, there he was looking ever so fine standing in front of me now. The whole entire world faded away and all that was left for the moment was this complete stranger I had only met last night but somehow captivated the very essence of my very heart. There was no need for me to try and act cool now. He already knew I was snagged hook, line and sinker. Smiling all the way up the many stories in the elevator up to my room he took notice of the posh décor of the hotel. "You should see where I'm staying, this is a royal palace compared to it" His first impression of me he automatically thought I was going to be a spoiled high-maintenance girl that had money coming in from a parents hefty trust fund. Casually he got to find out through many deep and meaningful conversations that my life's grim story wasn't that pretty at all. For some reason beyond my knowledge I had the need to tell this stranger almost everything.

Wanting to be judged and looked down upon for everything about my life that I knew was wrong and being the first time I had spoken about my years with Jeffrey to anyone honestly like that ever before, I had felt like I had deserved punishment. He offered me no judgment, instead only gave me his warmth and compassion as he wrapped his strong arms around me, making me feel so meager and small but so safe at the same time. Encouraging me to see the worthiness of myself and leave that life behind, he adorned me with a kind love that I wasn't accustomed too.

He took me in and made me feel so at home. It was like I had known him my whole life. I couldn't bear to be without him another second while I was away on this dream holiday. When he wasn't training for Muay-Thai tournaments and I wasn't in school, nobody would ever see us. Too enveloped in each other in my hotel room to care about anything else. Which is why I asked him to come stay at my hotel with me, seeing he was never at his own anyways. My girlfriend was soon departing back to Wisconsin, making my room more than available for him. Enchanted by his words and tender touch, the way he made love to me was again like nothing I had experienced before. Even down to after sex as I had been routinely instructed by Jeffrey to get up for a warm washcloth to clean his genitals afterwards, he refused it, telling me I was no longer a slave and that he didn't want me acting like one. He'd just rather lay down together afterwards and repeat our sweet nothings with many adjoining kisses.

On our third night together with nothing but the bed sheets between us, we had spent all night looking into each other's eyes sharing such an undeniable passion for one another. In the deepest caverns of my heart I knew this man would give me what I had never experienced before…True love. We were still laying in each others arms when the orange and pink sunrise began to rise slowly through the peak's of my rooms windows, enticing me to come feel the freshness of the morning's chill. Only the bed sheets were still wrapped around my body as I went the balcony. It was overlooking the city in a valley surrounded by mountainous tops. My thoughts began to rampage through my head and I knew this could only be a dream for me. It was getting serious now, too serious for the life that I led back home. As if he sensed my anxiety Robbie walked up behind me and wrapped his strong arms around my waistline, gently kissing my neckline and pausing with his ever so thoughtful stares and gave me the exact opening that I needed to expel my thoughts. "Back home, as you already know, I am going back to someone else, it's my job, and as much as I really like you, this guy that I kind of see is going to expect me to be putting him first, I am so sorry to say all of this after such a wonderful few days we have spent together, but you need to know this thing happening between us can't get anymore serious than what we have for now. I am so sorry" I looked down to the floor with nothing else I could say to alter his perception of me now that I had told him the truth and it never dawned on me that thought he wouldn't be out the door before I could even finish my sentence but he continued to surprise me with his efforts to make me believe we were more than just friends with a summer crush. " You see… your problem is that you don't see what I am looking at right here in front of me, a beautiful girl who is completely lost in a game that she has no control over. Get out of it now, take my hand and follow me back to my home in Australia." I heard what he had said but I found it hard to comprehend what he was actually talking about. "What?" I asked him with a look of confusion on my face. "Your nobody's property, you can do this. Marry me." His statements got more and more profound as he went on. Repeating the question he got on one knee and proposed again " Jenna, I am in love with you and want to spend the rest of my life making you happy. Please don't go back to him. I know that I am the only one for you and I will always treat you right. He paused for another second and repeated his question "Jenna, will you please marry me?" My hands fell into my face after that and without even letting myself think through the answer, I let my heart do all of the talking. Looking back up at him I said "Yes!" I almost shouted the answer at him, as if saying it louder would give the word more meaning. Wanting to believe him and everything that he was saying felt like a vacation from all of the suffering and loneliness that I had endured over a lifetime of abuse and degradation but knowing what you want and getting it are two different things that rarely went hand in hand…or so I thought. All I knew from the brief period I had known this stranger was that he was offering me a life and love down an unfamiliar path and it was a gamble to believe a complete stranger but somehow I knew he was right. My heart was beating so loud I thought it was going to jump right out of my chest. With the earnestly in my reply he picked me up in his strong arms and took me back to the bed and reiterated his words in a more physical sense this time. Never had I felt loved like this before, so swept off my feet and unable to even think, eat, or do anything for that matter which would involve leaving the hotel room without him.

Everyday after school would be my Robbie waiting to take me back to the hotel room for another night's passionate rendezvous, but a few nights after his proposal, he had another surprise in store. He didn't just want to get married someday. He wanted to get married now, this week even. I walked into the fabric store and was attended too by several seamstresses who were already be expecting my arrival. I was there to design and have fun designing my own dream wedding dress. While I was busy picking out fabrics and having measurements taken I would look away for a moment only to catch his tender eyes staring in my direction. Such adoration behind his looks…could it be real? I would often ponder it to myself just hoping for the gamble I was taking to work

out. I still had to believe in something better than what I was accustomed too and here he was right smack dab in front of me.

Giggling at all of the lace and frills they were trying to dress me up in, looking more like an antique porcelain doll than anything else I closed my eyes and pictured the day that I thought would never come, starting to imagine the kind of dress I would like to wear I envisioned a simple sleekness, a complimentary figure hugging gown with a small train but long enough to distinct it as an actual wedding dress. After we settled on what we were going to wear for the big day, we would next have to decide where we would hold the ceremony. Not before celebrating the entire week beforehand though. We started our honeymoon early celebrating every night spending our time between my hotel room and sending our heads spinning on the dance floor at many different clubs. Only with each other in sight, the dance floor was ours, we were out to give each other something to remember each night by. I whispered all of the things I couldn't wait to do him once we got back to the hotel room and watching him heat up on the dance floor I was never able to get enough of him driving me crazy. Like a thirst I was unable to quench, his lips were like a fountain of deep springs that I could never reach the bottom of.

Seven days, exactly a week after his proposal I sat on my bed in distress, contemplating what I would say to the man who I was about to call. There was no nice way to go about it. I couldn't last forever with him and this was my one chance to get out of it for good. I was leaving him, never to return to him ever again. I just had to go ahead and do it. Part of me was hoping he'd be at least a little happy for me and the sudden change in my life's direction but the other part of me knew I was already asking too much of him.

Calling his office in New York I was transferred to Jeffrey's personal office. He picked up the phone on the third ring, pausing before I could get any of the words to come out of my mouth but I mustered up my courage eventually and gave him my prepared spiel. Beginning with how much I had appreciated everything he has done for me up until this point. I hoped he would be understanding but he just wanted me to hurry up and get to the point. Trying to contagiously pass on my excitement through the phone lines, I finally screamed out "I'm getting married! Can you believe it?" No reply was given only a silence on the other end. Trying to make some conversation ridding the uncomfortable silence, I went on to tell him about Robbie and how I had fallen madly in love with him over the last amazing few days we'd spent together. The absence of sound made my thoughts begin to run wild and to get some response I had to ask him what he thought about everything I was telling him. Finally a few seconds later his reaction to the news sunk in and his only and final reply until many years to come was " Have a good life!" With that statement he slammed down phone receiver. Leaving only an echo of the dial tone to answer back too. I was to paralyzed from the shocking response. "What have I just done?" was the first thing that entered my thoughts. Overwhelmed with guilt I felt like I was falling down a deep and dark hole and then the tears began to flood in. Here I was standing at the dawn of a new happy life for myself and I couldn't see past how bad I had let Jeffrey down not yet seeing the hold he had on me.

Like my knight on a white horse, in came my hero to soothe my somberness. He rushed over to the bed where I was beating myself up mentally and wiped the falling tears from my cheeks. "I take it that it didn't go so well…huh?" Sniffling through my sobs I managed to tell him that "It doesn't matter anymore all I care about is you and leaving all of that life behind me!" I wrapped my arms around him and he asked me in a half joking voice "Then why are you crying?" He got me almost laughing now too "I guess it's just so scary taking such a huge plunge away from what I'm used too and taking such a big move to another country. It's just all so different and I'm just trying to comprehend everything that is happening in such a short time." Always out to lift my spirits his next comments made me gush in laughter "You think that was a hard phone call wait until I call my Sicilian mother! Watch this, I know exactly what she'll say. First it'll be a saga about how I'm killing her with my selfish actions then it'll be about how she's going to kill herself for doing such a terrible job raising normal children. Don't worry though, she'll love every second of it. Wogs thrive off of the drama in their lives and off everybody else's for that matter!!" He was pretty much on the dot when he told me how she'd react to the news. In the end after relentlessly trying to change his mind, she sighed, "If it was going to be anybody to do something as crazy as this, Robbie, it would be you!" It wasn't a blessing as such but at least she wasn't threatening suicide any longer.

Calling the closest of our families the night before our wedding to share with them our announcement wasn't celebrated by any members of either sides but that didn't discern us one bit. My parents took it well, considering their only daughter was marrying a foreign man that they didn't know from the next guy on the street and too top it off I was moving to Australia, permanently. When I asked my Dad many years later why they hadn't put up a fight, he just simply replied that nobody expected it too last very long. Fair enough, I thought. I don't think anyone did at first…even us at our toughest times. We were a rare attribute these days in the numb era we have all been accustomed to living in, turning nothing into something, which I had also come to realize, was the most precious gift in life…Love.

Falling asleep was easy to do in his arms that night. I laid my head on top of his chest listening to the drum of his beating heart. I had never felt like I was more at home than ever before in my life. He pulled me gently in closer to him, letting me know that he was there for me even when the lights went out and the thoughts would usually creep in. Amazing how he knew what I needed without even asking for it. Wishing for something like this my whole life I thought I was being such a fool in so many ways, but I was so wrong. The way his pretty eyes looked at me with such an understanding and compassionate sincerity made me want to trust his words and believe the love that he was offering me was indeed real.

The next morning, Robbie was up and out of bed early to pick up our tailored wedding suits and dresses for our big day at Doi Cept Temple. His best friend from high school days that was travelling with him from Australia met him in the hotel lobby at seven o'clock. He was going to be joining us for the wedding as Robbie's best man. He still hadn't been able to find black shoes to go with the suit, so after he dropped off my dress back to me he was off again to try and find himself a pair of decent looking ones. Overjoyed with excitement I was thrilled from the second I kissed Robbie good-bye for the last time before we were officially married. Looking in the same mirror only a week ago I was now a different person, I felt like I was plunging into a bottomless abyss. Here I go, I thought to myself as I plunged out the door letting the butterflies in my stomach carry me all the way to my nearly husband.

I had to go to the beauticians that morning for my pre- wedding makeup and dressing. The ladies who were doing my hair and face at the salon did a great job making me feel so beautiful for my special occasion that every girl dreams about their whole entire life. Requesting simplicity at best, not wanting to go overboard with all of the wedding apparel they tied my long hair up into a knot wrapping around it a veil of flowers made up of baby's breath and small yellow and purple budding flowers. I couldn't have dreamt it up better myself and when I met my husband to be at the bottom of the mountain he stood before me speechless "You look so… beautiful!" were his first words that his mouth formed almost whispering them. He took my hand and we walked into the sky lift together. Behind us followed an interpreter that Robbie hired to translate the Buddhist Monks ceremony speech for us English only speakers and then his best friend, who only moments before gave him the best mans speech about being the last chance to walk away from this and not get married to a girl he hardly knew, but my Robbie wouldn't hear a word of it. He already made up his mind the instant he proposed and I said yes, "I was born to be with this girl," he told his best mate. "Alright then lets go do this then!" Once he knew Robbie was sure in his decision he was more than ecstatic for him. We were slowly lifted up the tremendous mountainside, surrounded by the floral green carpet of mossy grass that covered the earthly skyscraper and falling fog, it was like being carried to heaven or the closest thing to it! Taking my eyes off the scenery and catching him adoringly staring at me again, I welled up with unstoppable tears. "I am so lucky, is this really happening?" He squeezed my hands and replied back "You're the only one for me…I love you!" relieving the anxiety written all over my tear stained face.

Chapter 22

Getting out of the carriage we were greeted by good fortune from the Gods above. A sun shower cascaded over us at we advanced into the ancient holy temple. My tears of joy dried and my happiness was glowing for all to see. The many visitors to the temple stopped and took photos of the passing bride and groom, no other foreigners had ever been married there and certainly anyone wearing traditional western wedding attire, such a sight had never been seen behind these religious walls, we became a permanent icon at the temple. The ceremony was done in the Buddhist customs according to their ancestral accordance, and translated for us in our own language. Both Robbie and I were anointed with a blessing from the monk with a splash of water and seven sacramental bracelets, each one representing another meaning to the longevity of our union together. We signed our names in the Buddhist wedding registry of Doi Cept Temple and officially became Mr. & Mrs. Roberts at least officially in our hearts knowing the laws of Australia only recognize certified weddings, meaning when we got back to his homeland we'd have to make a run for the courthouse. This was our real wedding though, perfect down to every detail. Walking up to the highest point of the temple to the balcony hanging over the edge of a cliff side over looking the city of Chang-Mai, we knew we had found the perfect spot to recite our vows of love to each other. Providing everything for me and more than I could ever ask for, his vows were to love me unconditionally until death do we part, shelter me from all the cruelty in the world that I was so accustomed too and to be like the bear, because the bear never forgets. Tears once again streamed down from my eyes as he made this moment unforgettable. Wiping the mascara fading underneath my eyelids whilst giggling at my embarrassment I took his hands back into mine again and gave him the vows that were the sacred prepared words from my heart. My ears were thundering the sound of a million horses hoofs descending downhill and my heart was beating so fast my words barely trembled out of my mouth when I began to tell him how much he had changed my whole life around and how I would dedicate my entire being to loving him and only him until I blew my final breath.

I meant every word that I said to him, this was it for me, wanting nothing more out of life than to be with someone like him to raise a few kids together and grow old on the front porch letting the days fade us by. I know it probably sounds boring to most and it would've to me as well many years ago but after the life I had led, I had enough experience in the real world for my liking and now all I want to do is to enjoy the remaining days of my life for what it is…a simple and satisfying existence. Our day was so special but not only to us, even too the Monk that married us. Upon our descent down the lifts he asked if he could take a photo with the bride and groom in front of their symbolic liberty bell signifying the union between east and west. It represented a lot for us too, it was the commencement of a new life together and just the beginning of battling each other's past demons together.

Kissing the bridal party goodbye, who were just the local girls I had met on some of our many nights out of having fun. I threw my arranged bouquet of Thailand's white wedding floras mixed with colorful orchids to the screaming Thai women behind me and we were given one last tradition to take with us, the release of caged doves. It was such an incredible gesture, especially for me. Symbolizing their freedom as well as mine I opened the cage's door to let them free to decide our own fates. As the wings on the birds began to spread open and they took their final decent into the blue skies granting themselves freedom I knew mine had finally come too. The relevance of watching them fly away and how I had perceived my own day of marriage related to the identical feeling of fleeing an entrapment of my own kind. I was liberated from the bounds of slavery I had come to know over the many years I had spent with my fair share of greedy perverted old men only to have serendipity mend my scars with the powerful healing of what true love has to endeavor on.

As customary in the romance novels I had read as a young girl he picked me up in the hallway before our hotel suite and carried me over the threshold, poufy dress and all. My arms were tightly squeezed around his neck never once taking my eyes off of him until he revealed yet another sweet surprise. Besides the cleaners tiding up my room while we were gone they were also given instructions by none other than the groom himself to pick the petals off the stems of red roses to place on our bed in the shape of a giant heart. The rose petals led the way to where we consummated our love physically and it was undeniably the first time in my life I had really ever been made love too. Hours had passed by before we thought about anything else besides one another's words of arousal, tantalizing touches, and lingering kisses. We ate a quiet dinner at a local restaurant and went straight back to the arms of each other again, so profoundly in love with one another it was the ideal display of what the "honeymoon period" should have to show for. It was crazy, young and energetic, just what it should be between two blossoming lovers.

The following morning we left the Princess Hotel, no longer under any of Jeffrey's financial privileges or control so to speak, continuing our love spree in another dwelling of our own accord. Three days later when we finally showed our face for the first time since checking in downstairs in the new hotel lobby, besides to request fresh sheets and towels, the entire staff of the hotel had a good laugh at our expenditure, from their reaction it must've been nice to see a couple so affectionately fond of each other.

Now we wanted to have another type of fun, Robbie had visited a tourist agent by himself before we got hitched to book a honeymoon itinerary for us to explore Thailand and beyond together, another surprise he had in store for me. We left early in the morning and joined the crowded bus for our journey beyond the border of Thailand to a village in the war torn nation of Laos. When we got through the extremely armored visa office eight hours off the beaten path, we then had to cross a flooding river from a recent heavy downpour of rain in a slim banana boat that looked like it could barely handle our weight let alone the excess of my luggage that Robbie was so kind to trek around the world for me.

Unbelievably we did make it to the other side only to find that my honeymoon in the tropics wasn't exactly how it had been explained to me. Naked children ran through the dirty streets, with one boy that decided to release his bladder on the pathway where we were walking as we passed by him on the way to our hotel. My doubts of his choice in destinations became apparent after that sight. Robbie was getting hungry after we hadn't eaten the entire duration of the trip and being such a rugged man he could digest just about anything. Deciding to stop on the side of the road he ordered some kind of seafood dish…daring I thought, settling for some toast and jam, something safer I thought. Then I saw the lady behind the counter dip some plates in a dirty bucket full of dirty water and then rinse in another bucket of water that didn't look as bad as the previous mud drenched one and then further proceeded to put my toast and his food on top of them serving it to us all in a clear view. I just couldn't bring myself to even fathom it "I can't eat that!" I mouthed in a hushed voice trying to quietly make my point clear but was made public with his loud mouth outburst of "Why not? Looks fine to me. You have to try and eat something, you haven't eaten all day!" I know it was just his caring side that was trying to force me and to top it off he is Sicilian and they're all about eating so it was our first debate and now we were officially married with many more marital conflicts to subsequently follow. Two head strong and stubborn people both with the right intentions but still recovering from old wounds. It was only natural and important that we fought just as much as we made passionate love together. Countlessly proving to one another the true intentions of each other loves but sometimes in not so seemingly actions.

Finally arriving at the hotel it was like a scene out of a horror flick. We were showed up to the room that looked like someone had been brutally killed in. The bed sheets were torn apart and the bed was stained with blood from some poor helpless victim. Nearly vomiting at the pure sight of the room and the stench that accompanied it, I was now tearing at the thought of even staying here for a single moment longer. "No way!" I told my new husband and from the tone in my voice he knew I was serious. Not that I was not denying the fact I have never been an outback type of girl. I was fine with that impression, I am no snob but give me the simple luxuries of a clean bed and a shower then I'll make myself at home, but this was just the epitome of filth and even possibly an act of a horrendous event but who knows, the lady who showed us to the room seemed fine with it passing it off as a hooker on her period. In some ways that was even worse…"Yuk…Okay Robbie it's time to go…now!" we were heading back down hill back to the passport center declaring our passage back into Thailand. Considering us a risk due to the short time we spent crossing the border and back, the officials held us at gunpoint while others rummaged through our luggage for drugs or whatnot. Finding nothing of course they released us and stamped our passports, making us good for another three months if we wanted. We were thankful for escaping with our lives alone, although we had nothing to hide but still an endearing experience nonetheless in the first days of our honeymoon of all days.

Chapter 23

Arriving in Koh Samui for finally a bit of relaxation in the tropics, it was my idea of how a holiday should be, sunny warm, and clean… well, clean enough. We lived it up like kings for the next six weeks. Making it an ideal way for two strangers to properly get acquainted. Dancing into the wee hours of the night and making love in the blistering heat of the sunny days we discovered everything on that island… mostly being each other. We made friends of all sorts, mostly travelers, but everyone the same in being taken aback by our fairytale romance. With our captivated eyes never straying too far from one another anyone could easily see the strong chemistry between us.

Trying to find the woman in me wasn't difficult, as I took to the bounds of marriage with such ease, no longer a girl I loved the idea of being a wife and belonging to a husband like Robbie. Marriage was bliss for the duration of our honeymoon until we had to ride coach on our way to Bangkok Airport to fly out to Australia. Chatting away with always so much to say to each other we watched a movie and finally got comfortable leaning up against each other as pillows. We both fell asleep on the long ride and when we woke up to the sound of the buses brakes coming to a halt we initially realized my purse and Robbie's wallet with all of our money and cards in it was missing. Stranded in the city of Bangkok was frightening enough as it was but too make matters worse a lady looking in her mid-seventies, scrawny and hunched over from an obvious lack of nutrition lifted up her skirt to a passer-byer with a she-male hanging off his arm and began smacking her vagina blaring out "Look! No cock…Pussy, pussy! Only five baht" repeating herself many times over the man just walked on past as she sat back down on the curb waiting for the next alluring customer. Robbie and I shook our heads in disgust and disbelief, things could really be that bad for someone, I would know best as it wasn't far off the life Jeffrey had been training me up for.

Completely broke at two o'clock in the morning and with no one to call for help, I panicked right away. Robbie rubbed my back and his tired eyes trying to make the situation better. Luckily we had made friends with some really nice people from the resort on the island who gave us about two thousand baht when they saw how devastated Robbie and I were. With just enough money to rent a really cheap room for the night at a backpackers hostel and pay for a taxi to the airport the following day, we were saved.

Early the next morning we were off in separate planes, since Robbie's ticket was pre-booked and no available seats left for me to join him meant we would be landing in Australia separately. Fortunately we had found a corresponding flight that arrived within the same hour of each other but I would have to make a stop over to the Philippines. The lengthy hours of the duration on the flight seemed to stretch on with only the thoughts of the journey ahead of me I couldn't wait to get back to my husbands loving arms. The trip was going well, sleeping the majority of the flight until I had to change planes in the Philippines.

After the plane landed and before any passenger was allowed to get off we were handed a declaration statement that informed us that if we were carrying any drugs or weaponry, we would be arrested and face charges with death as the ultimate penalty. Not that I had anything to worry about, but what a thought to willingly sign over your life. I got the chills handing over my signed declaration and traveling documents to the customs officer. Obtaining my passport he additionally asked to see my departing ticket. No problem I thought, just I had done many of times, and I handed over the requested information. The officer looked me over

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and got on the phone immediately which sounded like a phone call to his superiors but I couldn't tell since it was in another language. A brief conversation but long enough to get me thinking, he then called over two guards who took me by the arms and brought me into an empty room but for a desk and three chairs to be interrogated. No one would tell me what was going on they all just scattered around in frenzy, ignoring all of my hysterical inquisitions. Leaving me by myself and alone with my thoughts I couldn't help but panic even worse now.

This was a total bombshell of confusion on my part, what had I done wrong? Minute's later a large-framed women in a green uniform entered the room with the guards from before and sat down across from me with a stern look in her eyes. She placed my documents on the desk in between us. Not saying a word to me she was waiting for me to give her an explanation for something. "Can you please tell me what this is about, have I done something wrong?" I asked her politely, trying to restraint any animosity towards her. Her reply sounded as grim as she looked. "You have been in Thailand for three months and now you have only a one way ticket booked to Australia with no visa. What exactly are your plans once you get there, Ms. Roberts?" To myself I wondered what business it was to her, don't people travel with one-way tickets all the time? Knowing I was in no position to be able to say anything like that or even at all I just gave in nicely and told her my intentions to travel over there. Crying through my entire explanation I wasn't sure if I was going to even make my flight now. She had to think about everything I had told her for a moment, deciding whether or not she would grant me permission to meet my husband in Australia or send me back alone to Bangkok. With only time on my side she had to make a hasty verdict now. One more question had to be answered before I was let go, she wanted some proof. " If you have just got married can you show me your marriage certificate then?" This didn't help my stories credibility at all seeing that we were married in a Buddhist temple and given woven bracelets instead of certificates. Explaining to her that I didn't have one to show her yet but was already aware that I would have to obtain a legal marriage certificate through a courthouse upon my arrival in Australia to stay there legally, it was only because of my husbands beliefs we wanted to get married in a Buddhist ceremony. She must have shared a common interest in religion or something like that as she finally cracked a smile upon the photos of the wedding day that I showed her and carrying in my purse since getting them developed, if she wanted proof, well this is all I really had.

Handing me back my documents and ticket I was now free to leave but she wasn't leaving me much time to run through the airports terminal to get to my departing plane. Expeditiously bolting through the busy airport

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my adrenaline was still pumping from the previous encounter with the officials of the Philippines who had enough power to condemn me if they had felt like it. I caught my plane in the knick of time and once I was settled in my seat my thoughts went back to my dear Robbie and how much I was missing him. I was just relieved that I was on my way to be back with him again soon.

Looking out the window I could see the red earth beneath me. As I landed for the last time I took notice of the first steps I walked off the plane and onto a new soil for the first time. I had so much to be looking forward too in my new homeland. In my heart I knew this was all I ever wanted, this was going to be my haven. There was another surprise in store for me when two elder strangers walked up to me and asked my name. "Are you Jenna?" Nodding at their question they gave me their first names and wrapped their arms around my neck. My new mother-in law then said, " We are Robbie's parents. We wanted to be the first ones who welcomed you to Australia and into our family" It was my in-laws meeting me for the first time. Handing me some balloons and flowers they even had gifts for their new daughter-in law. While waiting for Robbie's plane to arrive we all chatted about many things like the flight over from Thailand and the scare at the previous airport in the Philippines. I asked them how they knew whom to look for? My father in law laughed, saying recognizing me was easy from Robbie's detailed description. He told them to look out for a petite, young blonde carrying an abundance of luggage. Laughing together over a few more brief conversations of getting to know each other better they seemed relieved to finally meet me compared how stressed she sounded in the conversations I overheard Robbie having with her while in Thailand.

Watching the arrivals board I knew Robbie's plane had landed ages ago but was just waiting for him to get out of customs. It didn't bother me anyhow, I was enjoying get accompanied with his parents for the first time. Eventually I saw my husband walking down the runway behind the gates, I just couldn't wait a second longer. I ducked underneath the gates and ran all the way up the runway to jump excitedly into his arms. I wrapped my arms and legs around him holding onto him for dear life. I just missed him so much I knew I would never let him go, theoretically speaking that is, and I never have nearly a decade later.

Chapter 24

Over the near decade we spent together, Robbie and I have shared the common highs and lows that every determined marriage endures. It has

taken a lot of hard work and doesn't come without its flaws but no matter what it is just perfect for the two of us. He helped me how to remember to smile again and life has slowly began to sort itself out. They say that time heals all wounds but what I had experienced in my young years wasn't nearly long enough to let all of the hurt go. Seeking help through many counselors and psychiatrists I was doing everything I could do to deal with the scars and all of the pain left behind. Completely off of any pharmaceuticals, since the last day of our honeymoon, and healing my heart with love instead of hate our marriage is my foundation and Robbie is my solid rock. We have to be for one another, putting the bonds of our union through the wringers and back, as neither of us expected my past life eventually to come back and haunt me after so long.

Our blissful life came to a sudden halt one day when we were out visiting my in-laws at their nearby house on just another plain afternoon. There was a knock on the front door and my father in law got up from watching TV on the couch to answer it. He rushed back quickly coming into the dining room, where I was feeding my nineteen months and five month old boys at the table, and he blurted out, "Jenna there are three police officer's at the door asking for you by the name of Virginia Roberts!" I asked my mother in law to stay with the babies to find out what this was all about. I didn't even think it had anything to do with Jeffrey at first and wasn't even worried when I opened the door to offer them to come inside to talk.

They weren't actually police officers and two federal agents of Australia with one F.B.I agent from America. The American agent asked if I wouldn't mind actually coming outside so that I may speak with them in private. "Okay" I said, as well as mentally preparing myself for something big from the look of it, it's not over a parking ticket or anything small that you get three federal agents knocking at your in-laws front door asking to speak in private. "Can we first ask you if you are in fact Ms. Virginia Roberts and originally from Palm Beach County in the United States?" I confirmed my name and previous state of residence then they even asked, "May we see some identification please?" A different agent asked the question this time and I told him "I will have to go and grab it, my purse is inside. I'll just be one second."

Robbie was standing on the other side of the door trying to figure out what they were doing here talking to me and when I rushed through it to grab my purse and saw him standing there looking puzzled, I told him I had no idea what this was about yet, but not too worry everything was going too be just fine. Taking a deep breath and slowly exhaling outwards, I opened the door to find out exactly what the agents wanted to talk about.

Pulling out my Australian drivers license from my wallet, I was going to hand it over to them but they were sufficed at a quick glance. There was no meet and greet, they went straight to the point. One agent picked up a briefcase off the porch floor and opened it up taking out a stapled stack of paper. Then that same agent asked me if I had ever known an affiliate by the name of Mr. Jeffrey Epstein. All of the sudden my stomach tangled in a familiar knot that I hadn't felt in many years from a past life that I was trying to forget about. I nodded in affirmation of their question and said "It was a long time ago and he's no longer an affiliate of mine, but yes, I did know him once." It was shameful enough to think about let alone talk about with them for the first time since I had started my entire life over. His next response left me nothing short of speechless. The United States Attorney's Office for the district of Florida was giving me a notification of being an identified victim. Jeffrey was finally caught for his atrocious acts of perversion on girls who were barely old enough to even comprehend "the birds and the bees" so to speak.

On June 30th 2008, Jeffrey Epstein pleaded guilty for procurement of minors to engage in and solicitation of prostitution. More than a dozen girls had been named as victims of Jeffrey's federal offense's and without ever stepping a day in court he was granted a plea bargain consenting to charges that named him a registered pedophile for only two of the minor girls. Getting away with even serving only twelve of the sentenced eighteen months behind bars be that in the evening alone and in the morning he was released during the day. Restricted to the confinement of his lavish mansion in Palm Beach only to be with his original sex slaves from over ten years ago, Nadia Marcinkova and Sarah Kellen, and knowing Jeffrey all too well, they wouldn't be the only ones there while he was pulling his laughing stint of retribution. Even at nighttime the girls were still allowed to visit him, accounting to nearly seventy times while serving his time in incarceration.

No justice had been served for any of us victims. Denied the very constitutional rights allegedly there to protect and serve us. We weren't allowed to have a voice in front of a jury and judge or even informed for that matter. Instead we were handed this notification of being a victim but told we were all too late to do anything about. To make matters worse part of that plea bargain was that we had the option to sue him with the lawyers he provided for us, and conveniently enough I found out later they were also his lawyer's old friends from the college days.

I felt my knees go weak and the anxiety churning in my stomach was now making me feel sick. Taking the bundle of paperwork from the agent who was now handing it to over me, I had to excuse myself before my legs actually buckled. Closing the door behind me I couldn't even find the words to tell my husband what was going on. I rushed to the back of the house and went out to the back yard where I wanted a minute to compose myself and process the information I had just been told. Robbie followed behind me but the stillness in my eyes convinced him to give me that moment to compile my emotions.

A few moments later and I was ready to talk. Collapsing into his arms with such anguish, he just held me until my sobs subsided and I was able to tell him what actually happened. Starting with an apology, I began to tell him how I was so sorry but my troubled past has come back to plague our simply sweet lives and was just about to turn it all upside down. He was so understanding from the beginning of all this, telling me that he will always be behind every choice that I make in mending the sorrows of my tormenting past and there he has been through all of the thick and thins.

Deciding to call the lawyers on the victim suit provided for me was a big decision but one I had to do to seek the unanswered questions from my battered heart. The two women at the firm that I spoke to treated me so wonderfully, like long term friends they counseled me not only in the terms of a lawsuit towards Jeffrey but also in the matters of being emotionally and sexually abused. I chose to proceed with the lawsuit at least to make a statement to a man that tried to make a degrading statement about me so long ago. Now it was my turn, I had the choice to turn the tables on him hoping he would feel embarrassed and in the spotlight for everyone's entertainment where he had kept me for so many years.

Winning my lawsuit against him was not enough to heal old wounds, I never got the chance to stand up in front of a jury and tell them how much pain I had endured and still endure throughout the many nightmares I face when darkness hits and the silence of the sleeping household fills my head with pictures of reliving my past with him or the others he sent me too. Or did I even get to hear him confess his guilt and suffer the way I did locked in confinement for many years? No, instead I got to see a picture of Jeffrey with his arms around a very youthful looking teenager, if even that, parading the streets of New York, the very way he had with me and so many other girls long before.

As if it were a public display intended for not only his many victims to see but also a spectacle for the public justice system, it was bold show of insolence laughing in our faces while we all sat by not being able to do anything to help these young girls from the streets still suffering his perverted afflictions. Not much longer there was another story on Jeffrey I saw in the papers of him and Prince Andrew having a stroll together in Central Park. It instantly sparked my concerns for other girls in the very same position I was in so long ago and he was obviously up to the same old tricks, I had to do something now. Not being able to sit by any longer with the knowledge of being able to help out in some way. I had to tell my story no matter how shameful it was to even speak about. Putting my shame aside I had to derive every bit of courage I could sustain and now I am ready to tell it. The hardest lesson I had failed at learning until later on in my life became my strength, the belief in my inner voice and the ability to speak up. I do have a voice and now the world is going to hear it in my whispered cries for justice. Swept away by a surge of media with one phone call I sent Jeffrey's publicist into frenzy. Not to mention the release of the photos showing the first night that Prince Andrew and I shared together that I so happened to unveil for the public to see.

I spent too much of my life going out of my mind waiting for the rescue that never came until it was too late and then the scars were already imbedded deeply within. Thankfully I am now free from the struggles that nearly destroyed the love inside of my heart. I only wish it could be the same for the other victims, not just of Jeffrey's inflictions but every person who has ever suffered at the hands of another.

I'm here to tell you from my own experience that the moon is yours if that's what you want, all you have to do is stand up and take it. If some girl off the streets of Florida, like me, can stand up against the tyrants that run the deep pockets of our world, than anyone can. Just like I needed to believe that someone stood up for me once like Robbie did long ago, I now stand up for us. For all of us girls, the ones who are still on the streets and think they don't deserve better or it's an unachievable dream to be entitled to more out of life. For all of the beautiful girls who don't see beyond they're outside appearance. For all the girls still trapped in enslavement and unable to get out of the abuse that holds them down. But most of all, I stand up for every girls belief in love, because it is the very savior of my spirit and soul.

The End

Written and Illustrated by Virginia Roberts

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From: Steve Bannon [redacted]
Sent: 4/23/2019 12:57:52 PM
To: Michael Wolff [redacted]
CC: Jeffrey Epstein [jeevacation@gmail.com]
Subject: Re: Announcing the 2019 Hillman Prize winners

Importance: High

Pile on

On Apr 23, 2019, at 8:51 AM, Michael Wolff <[redacted]> wrote:

Another big prize for Miami Herald.

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: The Sidney Hillman Foundation <[redacted]>
Date: Tue, Apr 23, 2019 at 2:45 PM
Subject: Announcing the 2019 Hillman Prize winners
To: Michael <[redacted]>

Congratulations to the 2019 Hillman Prize recipients!

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Sidney Hillman Foundation Names Winners of 2019 Prizes for Journalism in Service of the Common Good

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Reuters, NBC News and MSNBC, ProPublica Receive Honors; Adam Serwer to receive Opinion & Analysis Prize

NEW YORK – The Sidney Hillman Foundation announced Tuesday winners of the 69th annual Hillman Prizes, recognizing a *Reuters* exposé of slum-like living conditions on U.S military bases, the *Miami Herald*'s investigation into Labor Secretary Alex Acosta's sweetheart deal with serial sex abuser, Jeffrey Epstein, and NBC News and MSNBC's reporting on the Trump Administration's family separation policy, among other standout reporting in service of the common good.

Hannah Dreier of ProPublica won a Hillman Prize for reporting that showed how the government's bungled crackdown on MS-13 has torn apart the lives of Latino immigrants. The Atlantic's Adam Serwer, who has emerged as a defining voice of the Trump era, won for his essays on racism and Trump's political movement, and Anna Clark won for her book on the Flint water crisis.

This year's prizes were judged by writer Ta-Nehisi Coates, the *New Yorker's* Jelani Cobb, *Reuters'* Alix Freedman, the *New Yorker's* Hendrik Hertzberg, the *American Prospect's* Harold Meyerson and *The Nation's* Katrina vanden Heuvel.

The 2019 winners of the Hillman Prizes are:

- **Newspaper** – *Miami Herald*, Julie K. Brown and Emily Michot: *Perversion of Justice*
- **Magazine** – *ProPublica* with *New York* magazine*, Newsday, This American Life, New York Times Magazine,* Hannah Dreier: *Trapped in Gangland*
- **Web** – *Reuters,* Joshua Schneyer, Michael Pell, Andrea Januta, Deborah Nelson: *Ambushed at Home*
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Reporting by this year's prize winners has had significant positive impact, including:

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- Three federal investigations, new legislation, widespread repairs, and a $386 million emergency program to inspect military housing for hazards
- The exposure of pervasive bias and negligence by Long Island police, leading to federal and local investigations and reforms

This year's honorees follow in the trailblazing tradition of past winners ranging from Murray Kempton in 1950 for his articles on labor in the south and Edward R. Murrow in 1954 for his critical reports on civil liberties and Joseph McCarthy at the height of the Red Scare; to 2017 newspaper winner, David Fahrenthold, for exposing Donald Trump's sexual harassment and mismanagement of his foundation.

The Hillman Prizes are open to journalists and subjects globally for any work widely accessible to a U.S. audience. Winners will be awarded a $5,000 prize at the Hillman Foundation's annual

ceremony in New York City on May 7.

"In a time when this country's highest powers have taken it as their business to demean the work of journalists, it is particularly significant for us to honor those who have taken up the tools of journalism to challenge corrupt power wherever it may reside," said Hillman judge Ta-Nehisi Coates.

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Since 1950, the Hillman's Prizes for Journalism honor the legacy of Sidney Hillman, an immigrant who dedicated his life to a "better America." Hillman believed that a free press was essential to a fair and equal society. The Sidney Hillman Foundation has sought to carry on his legacy by honoring journalists who illuminate the great issues of our times—from the search for a basis for lasting peace, to the need for better housing, medical care, and employment security for all people, to the promotion of civil liberties and the battle against discrimination based on race, nationality, or religion.

For more information, including to RSVP to the event, please contact Alexandra Lescaze at 646-448-6413 or Alex@HillmanFoundation.org

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Sent: 4/23/2019 4:06:36 PM
To: Michael Wolff [[redacted]]
CC: Jeffrey Epstein [jeevacation@gmail.com]
Subject: Re: Announcing the 2019 Hillman Prize winners

Importance: High

Fix always in

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Look at the judges on this thing: the right-thinking establishment to a tee (to a Ta-Nihisi).

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> Pile on
>
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From: Jeffrey Epstein [jeevacation@gmail.com]
Sent: 6/27/2009 11:22:50 AM
To: Peggy Siegal [redacted]
Subject: Re: July 22

now is fine

On Sat, Jun 27, 2009 at 7:05 AM, Peggy Siegal <[redacted]> wrote:

> Fine. What time
>
> ----- Original Message -----
> From: Jeevacation <jeevacation@gmail.com>
> To: Peggy Siegal
> Sent: Sat Jun 27 07:04:52 2009
> Subject: Re: July 22
>
> Call me this afternoon
>
> Sent from my iPhone
>
> On Jun 26, 2009, at 5:23 PM, "Peggy Siegal" <[redacted]> wrote:
>
> So I go to a designer's cocktail party last night and Jonanthan and Kimberly Farkus are there telling me about your coming home celebration and there might be on seat left on his cousin's plane....do you know about this?
>
> I mentioned that you said there was no "release" party....
>
> I am coming if there is one- if you don't a "surprise" event- you might want to get into this.
> Your friends are counting the days to freedom...
>
> Went to Heyward Isham's funeral today...father of Ralph and Chris...very sad. Old wasp diplomat who was our Ambassador to Haiti in 60's- sounds like CIA....is CIA
>
> Going to dinner with Amy Irving, her husband and Mario Platero, a brilliant Italian (jewish) journalist- very chic- wife in Engand- he travels with Obama...runs big news agency here- very funny- you will love him- will introduce in your new life..
> Cannes Diary finally went to press...
> Was in LA for 3 days of meetings with every studio...working hard for the business...it's there, but it'a like begging to get them to spend so we spend our days getting underwriting...thank God I have a guy in the office that does this...
>
> Poured all day in Hamptons- sun just came out...
> Miss you...
> xoxo Peg

From: Jeffrey Epstein [jeevacation@gmail.com]
Sent: 7/12/2009 11:37:00 AM
To: Sultan Bin Sulayem [[redacted]]
Subject: Re: World economy growth interesting reading

mandelson is in london

On Sat, Jul 11, 2009 at 9:15 PM, Sultan Bin Sulayem <[redacted]> wrote:

> * 11 Places With a Worse Economy Than USA
> By Rick Newman – Fri Jul 10, 11:50 am ET
>
> *How to tell when a real recovery begins.?
> By Rick Newman
>
> *Obama says stimulus plan to kick in later this year.
> Reuters
>
> 11 Places With a Worse Economy Than USA
> By Rick Newman – Fri Jul 10, 11:50 am ET
>
> When times are tough, one thing that tends to raise the spirits is knowing that somebody else has it worse. And as wretched as the U.S. economy seems, it's not as bad as in other regions.
>
> The International Monetary Fund's latest tally of world economic conditions forecasts a 2.6 decline in U.S. economic output for all of 2009, and anemic growth of 0.8 percent in 2010. That's more optimistic than the IMF's prediction from three months ago, but those are still lousy numbers. A weak economy throughout 2010 would mean a bleak employment picture, an agonizingly slow housing recovery, and another year or two likely to feel like a recession, whether it's technically labeled that or not.
>
> We should count ourselves lucky, though. The IMF expects at least 11 major parts of the world to have more severe economic contractions than the United State this year, including most of western Europe, Japan, Russia, and Mexico. Europe will still be stumbling along behind the United States next year, as well. Here are the IMF's projections for economic growth in various parts of the world:

	2009.	2010
China.	7.5.	8.5
India.	5.4	6.5
Middle East	2.0	3.7
Africa.	1.8	4.7
Brazil.	-1.3	2.5
World total	-1.4	2.5
Canada.	-2.3	1.6
U.S.	-2.6	0.8
France.	-3.0	0.4
Spain.	-4.0	-0.8
U.K.	-4.2	0.2
E U.	-4.7	-0.1

E Europe.	-5.0	1.0
Italy.	-5.1	-0.1
Japan.	-6.0	1.7
Germany.	-6.2	-0.6
Russia.	-6.5	1.5
Mexico.	-7.3	3.0

If these projections come true, it means the United States, despite its overspent consumers, wrecked banks, and insolvent auto makers, will be leading the world economy out of recession. Somehow. The developing world will help, but those high growth projections in China and India can be deceiving.

China in particular has government policies that practically mandate high growth, and 8.5 percent in 2010 would be just about the bare minimum to keep employment at tolerable levels. And neither China nor India is a major buyer of American-made goods and services; for the most part, it's the other way around. With much of the developed world trailing the United States, it will take American consumers to ratchet up demand for the world's products. Scary thought.

How to tell when a real recovery begins.?
4 Ways to Tell When a Real Recovery Has Begun

You could conclude just about anything from the daily cavalcade of economic statistics. Some suggest an imminent recovery. Others seem to foretell years of gloom. The bent of the expert interpreting the latest news—bull, bear, Obama-basher, Wall Street-hater—has as much to do with the outlook as the numbers themselves.

For the foreseeable future, there will be an aggressive hunt for two economic recoveries. One is the technical improvement in economic indicators that signals the economy is growing again. That's the one economists care about, which is why they scour the numbers on retail sales, business inventories, purchasing manager sentiment, subatomic inflation, the mood in Shanghai, and anything else that could help pinpoint the exact inflection point for a turnaround.

The other recovery, the one that most consumers are waiting for, is the one in which companies stop firing and start hiring, banks return to normal lending, and families stop worrying about jobs and income. And that turnaround—the consumer recovery—is likely to take much longer to materialize than the technical recovery.

The danger of hyping a technical recovery is that it will arrive, with much fanfare—but fail to make ordinary consumers feel better off. Many economists, for example, are predicting that the recession will officially end by this summer or fall. The only problem is that when a technical recovery begins, a lot of companies fail to get the memo. They don't play along; they keep payrolls lean and maybe even continuing to lay off workers. So to guard against false optimism, here's how to tell when a real recovery is finally kicking into gear:

Unemployment improves. The single best indicator of the health of the economy is the job market. People who have lost their job, or worry that they might, obviously hoard their money and don't spend. That spells doom for an economy driven by consumer spending, as ours is. But once it's clear that jobs are coming back, consumers are more likely to relax and open their wallets.

Projections about unemployment should make anybody queasy about the prospects for a recovery this year. The unemployment rate is currently 9.4 percent, a steep rise from one year ago, when it was an unremarkable 5.5 percent. And by most accounts, it's going to get worse. The International Monetary Fund expects the U.S. unemployment rate to be 10.1 percent in 2010. Economist Gary Shilling thinks unemployment will hit 11.4 percent and not peak until late next year.

It's hard to imagine a "recovery" in which jobs are even more scarce than they are now. When the unemployment rate finally starts to go in the other direction, we can start to think about putting the umbrellas away. Until then, no number of upticks or volume of optimistic talk will persuade Americans worried about their jobs that they should part with precious cash.

Housing prices stabilize. This has become a mantra by now: For the economy to get healthy, housing prices must stop falling. Problem is, the houses haven't been listening.

Housing matters for two reasons: It represents a big chunk of the economy, and it's the largest single repository of Americans' household wealth. With prices falling, buyers are scarce, since nobody wants to buy an expensive good today if it's going to be worth less tomorrow. With few buyers, all the other economic activity that swirls around real estate—remodeling, appliance and furniture sales, relocation services—is depressed. Homeowners are worse off, too, because the value of one of their vital assets is eroding.

House prices have already fallen by 32 percent nationwide from the 2006 peak. And they have further to go. The latest readings on the S&P/Case-Schiller home price index, one prominent measure, showed another record decline in May. At some point, the declines will moderate and stop being records. But prices need to stop falling altogether, and probably rise, for a real recovery to happen. The Federal Reserve thinks home prices could stop falling in 2010, after a total decline of 41 to 48 percent. Other metrics, like housing starts and new-home sales, might point upward before then. Those will be signs of signs of a turnaround, not the real thing.

Household wealth increases. The housing bust and the volatile stock market have hammered the traditional investment tools that most Americans use, causing epic declines in the wealth of Americans. Since 2006, household net worth has declined by about $12 trillion, which equates to about $107,000 of lost wealth for each of America's 112 million households. That's partly because of the 40 percent plunge in the stock market since October 2007 and partly because of the steep declines in real estate values.

Americans simply own less, too. Home equity for the typical homeowner is just 41.1 percent, a record low. In 2002, it was 58.4 percent. Owning less means we owe more and will have to rebuild savings before we can spend like we used to. "This will be a drag on all discretionary purchases," says Dirk van Dijk, an analyst at Zacks Investment Research who thinks the tightfistedness will cut into the earnings of firms ranging from hotel chains to furniture makers to motorcycle manufacturers. Those are the same kinds of companies that need to start hiring again for a real recovery to develop. But they won't if sales stay sluggish. A turnaround will require sustained stock market gains and an end to the housing bust.

President Obama stops fudging on the economy. There's still a lot that could go wrong, and Obama knows it. Yet part of the president's job is to reassure skittish Americans, even as his economic lieutenants are fighting battles in the war room. That's why Obama has been making half-hearted pronouncements, like saying that the economy shows "some return to normalcy" and that "we expect there'll be some stabilization of the economy." Virtually all of Obama's remarks on the economy contain modifiers and future tense and a not-quite-there-yet quality, since he'll blow his own credibility if he tries to convince Americans that they're better off than they actually are. When Obama starts hedging less, be happy. That will signal better days. Finally.
The IMF does offer a bit of more heartening news: The global wipe out finally seems to be receding. "The world economy is stabilizing," the IMF reports. Its global economic growth projection of 2.5 percent in 2010 is 0.6 points higher than predicted in April. But the global economy isn't expected to gain its footing in earnest until the second half of 2010. Maybe by then American spenders will have come out of hiding.

Obama says stimulus plan to kick in later this year Reuters
Obama says stimulus plan to kick in later this year

By Tom Doggett – Sat Jul 11, 3:13 pm ET

WASHINGTON (Reuters) – President Barack Obama said Saturday more time was needed for his $787 billion stimulus package to work, predicting the spending would have a bigger impact on the economy later this year.

In an advanced text of his weekly radio speech, Obama said the stimulus plan approved by Congress and signed into law in mid-February "was not designed to work in four months -- it was designed to work over two years."

U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner said it was too soon to decide whether the U.S. economy needed the help of a second-round of government stimulus to recover from recession.
"I don't think that's a judgment we need to make now, can't really make it now prudently, responsibly," he said in a taped interview with CNN that will air Sunday.

According to a transcript provided by CNN, Geithner said the "biggest thrust" of the stimulus package signed into law earlier this year would take effect in the second half of the year.

Obama's comments follow government data showing the unemployment rate soared to 9.5 percent in June, the highest level since 1983 and above the 8 percent peak predicted by the White House when it worked with Congress to pass the package. Republicans say the stimulus plan is not working.

Obama now warns unemployment likely will top 10 percent in the coming months.

"We must let (the stimulus plan) work the way it's supposed to, with the understanding that in any recession, unemployment tends to recover more slowly than other measures of economic activity," Obama said.

He said the benefits of the plan would "accelerate greatly throughout the summer and the fall."

The continuing recession and further steep job losses are wearing away the patience of Americans and raising doubts about Obama's handling of the economy.

The share of Americans who believe the stimulus package will restore the economy slipped to 52 percent in late June, down from 59 percent two months earlier, according to a Washington Post-ABC News poll.

Vice President Joe Biden said the administration had "misread" how bad the economy was when it took office but that the stimulus package would help the economy recovery and create jobs.

Senate Republican Leader Mich McConnell Friday called the stimulus plan a failure.

Obama said it takes time for the plan's money "to get out the door" to pay for roads, bridges and other infrastructure projects that will create jobs "because we are committed to spending it in a way that is effective and transparent."

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thereof.
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or incomplete transmission of the information contained in this communication,nor for any
delay in
its receipt or damage to your system.The sender does not guarantee that this material is
free from
viruses or any other defects although due care has been taken to minimise the risk.
****
****

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Sent: 1/12/2010 12:28:25 AM
To: Peggy Siegal [[redacted]]
Subject: Re: My Wall Street 2 Story

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When Gekko delivers his speech, "Greed, for lack of a better word, is good. Greed is right. Greed works," cinematic history was made.

"Wall Street" was set in 1985, a time before ten financial news networks broadcasting 24/7 existed. The entire financial services industry was largely unknown and Oliver Stone nailed it.

Four years ago, Wall Street's producer Ed Pressman decided it was time for a sequel and met with Fox Film Entertainment co-chairmen Tom Rothman and Jim Gianopulos. Michael Douglas was immediately on-board pending script approval. Steven Schiff wrote the first script before the global economic crash of 2008 rendered it obsolete.

Alan Loeb was brought in for a rewrite. Pressman asked me to meet Loeb at the Carlyle Hotel to explain the social rhythms of New York's financial high society. Whereas Gekko's character was modeled after '70s junk bond kings (Michael Milken) and '80s mergers and acquisitions killers (Henry Kravis), Loeb bases the new villain on hedge fund billionaires like John Paulson and Mike Novogratz, geniuses who have created stratospheric wealth beyond Gordon Gekko's wildest dreams. When Oliver Stone agreed to direct, he rewrote a portion of the script to focus on bankers as well as hedge funders, taking no screen credit.

This past September, Oliver yelled, "action" as Gordon Gekko, with long grey hair, comes back to life as he emerges from a lengthy prison stint shot outside of Sing Sing in Ossining, New York. Gekko is desperate to redefine himself in a different era. The New York Post runs a full-page photo of Gekko and New Yorkers immediately become obsessed with the filming of Wall Street 2.

A week into shooting, a glorious fall day. Ed Pressman invites me on the set at the Central Park Zoo. Oliver designs an elaborate tracking shot around the seal pool where Gekko, fresh from jail, walks and talks to Jake Moore, a young idealistic investment banker played by Shia LaBoeuf. They discuss Gekko's daughter Winnie, Moore's fiancée, played by Carrie Mulligan, who is also having an off-screen romance with LaBoeuf. Oliver played Cupid. Moore invites Gekko to the Alzheimer's Ball at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Gekko, who used to be a sponsor or honoree of such events, cannot even afford a ticket.

The shot starts with a barking seal jumping for fish, then pans down to the actors. Extras weave in and out. In one take Michael makes a wrong turn and ends up at the monkey house. Everyone laughs. The atmosphere on the set is courteous but quick and tense. There is pressure when you are making a sequel to a hit.

I watch the action on monitors while sitting on the producers' canvas chairs with Pressman, Eric Kopeloff ("Monsters Ball") and Celia Costas, who was a location manager on the first "Wall Street." They have asked me to be an extra in the Alzheimer's Ball scene and bring some friends to play rich Upper East Side socialites. Oliver wants over the top glam, go-to-the-vault jewels and couture gowns. "Give me the night before the Titanic goes down," were his exact words. Not a problem.

I pay a quick visit to Michael in his trailer on Fifth Avenue where he is resting. We go way back. I was his personal publicist when he won the Golden Globe and Oscar for Best Actor for "Wall Street" and we have remained great friends. Gekko is just as challenging for him the second time because of endless pages of technical financial dialogue. We discuss Catherine Zeta-Jones' Broadway debut in a "Little Night Music." Michael has a stack of partially finished handwritten thank you notes next to him for gifts received for their shared birthday party on September 25th at the St. Regis. Her 40th and his 65th.

I tell him I have been cast as an extra in two scenes and he laughs knowing I am desperate to hang around him and the production.

8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, October 21st, another warm, stunning fall day. I report to the wardrobe trailer on 65th Street and Madison Avenue. I carry four elaborate cocktail dresses and bags of matching accessories. My hair is in rollers. Statuesque Julia Koch walks over from her Park Avenue apartment carrying her white Valentino and long diamond earrings. Her real-life financial titan husband David is unaware where she is this morning.

Vanity Fair's keeper of the Best Dressed List, Amy Fine Collins, arrives totally organized in turquoise vintage Geoffrey Beene, and Vogue's fashion editor Hamish Bowles wears a riot of plaids, patterns and a large yellow fake flower on his lapel. Costume Designer Ellen Mirojnick, who created Gordon Gekko's rich slick look in the first film, is ecstatic with the extras I invited.

Oliver is shooting a scene with Josh Brolin (the star of Stone's "W"). His character Bretton (never Bret) James, a ruthless Wall Street kingpin, and his perfect wife Samantha (Noelle Beck) are hosting a benefit piano recital for a 13-year-old child prodigy in their huge, art-filled townhouse at 41 East 65th Street. The building actually belongs to Baby Jane Holzer, a wealthy art collector still famous for hanging with Andy Warhol in the '60s. The production designer had Jane's fabulous Warhols moved to storage and replaced with matching photographic copies. Very expensive contemporary art is again an important production element of Oliver's vision.

At 10:30 a.m., all the extras are placed around the living room set. Oliver's French mother, Jacqueline Stone, and her friend Monique Van Vooren, both in their 80s, are seated in front of the fireplace chatting in French. Production assistants fuss over them. Debonair macho man Chuck Pfieffer, who appeared in the original film, and I immediately invent a back story—I am his corporate wife—and we position ourselves on a couch next to the director's mother. Julia gets the best spot close to the piano and Amy, Hamish and decorator Geoffrey Bradfield are right behind her. Josh is brought in and the kibitzing stops.

Oliver appears on the set with eagle eyes and a sly grin and quickly re-positions everyone. He explains the scene, gives out lines to his favored extras, and on his way out to the monitors in the next room mentions that my earrings are too small. Wardrobe jumps. Josh rehearses and Oliver finally yells, "Action." The kid plays the piano, Josh explains why we are in his home, asks for money, the camera dollies as extras say their lines and Shia appears at the door uninvited for a confrontation with Josh. Three hours later a PA yells, "Lunch".

In costume, Amy, Hamish and I run to The Monkey Bar. I am late to meet "The Harpies," including Liz Smith, Barbara Walters, Cynthia McFadden, Nora Ephron, Jennifer Isham, Maury Perl and Beth Kseniak.

Graydon Carter is at the next table. I tell him Oliver Stone wants him in "Wall Street 2" as an extra. (I make this up.) Graydon jokes that he only works with lines. I say, "Not a problem." (This will be news to Oliver.)

Back on the set I tell Oliver that Graydon is willing to be in the film with lines. Oliver finds that intriguing.

Oliver shoots the piano recital scene over and over again from different angles all afternoon. Financial wizard Don Marron saunters on the set to visit and Oliver spontaneously puts him in a scene chatting with Josh. Carrie Mulligan hangs out watching boyfriend Shia work.

At sundown Julia Koch has to race from reel to real life and explain to her husband where she has been all day. (He loves it.)

Chuck Pfieffer plants a "Page Six" item and the next day socialites begin calling me to get into the film.

Thursday, November 5, Shun Lee Restaurant, West 65th Street

Oliver shoots a crowded tight interior scene with Michael, Carrie and Shia, who are having an intimate Chinese dinner. Spontaneously, Oliver decides this is the perfect scene for Graydon Carter. After a flurry of calls, Graydon arrives on set, and playing himself, sashays by the table. Gekko jumps up to say hello and Graydon brushes him off with a few dismissive lines.

Monday, November 9, 25 Broadway

One hundred swells show up at the former Canard Shipping building, a massive Italianate hall, at the crack of dawn for the Alzheimer's Ball, a grand charity event.

Susan Hess and I are chauffeured downtown with our Vera Wang gowns and report to the VIP extra holding area where we join Prince Dimitri of Yugoslavia in a bespoke dinner jacket, journalist Christopher Mason, songstress Yanna Avis, photographer Kelly Klein, art dealer Larry Gagosian's girl friend Shala Monroque in see-through Rodarte, beauty executive Olivia Chantecaille, producer Lawrence Robins, author Jackie Weld Drake, Vogue film critic Joan Juliet Buck, fashion consultant Jill Fairchild, CNN's Felicia Taylor and Italian newsman Mario Calvo-Platero.

Ellen Mirojnick and her costume department have assembled racks of the most expensive elaborate designer gowns and work at break neck speed styling while we wildly strip to our undies in a makeshift dressing area. Ellen pours me into a black tulle Marchesa with a enormous wired silver bow. Twenty hairdressers and make-up artists systematically work on 250 extras. A mile of tables are alternately filled with steaming coffee, fattening breakfast foods, hair sprays, mirrors, shoes and jewelry. It's a madhouse of excitement.

We are led to the part of the set used for the cocktail reception and placed around Michael Douglas and Charlie Sheen stand-ins. Charlie has been flown in from LA for half a day's work to reprise his original character. He is now the highest paid television actor commanding two million dollars an episode of "Two and a Half Men."

Oliver arrives on the set greeting, examining, tweaking the shot and always pulling the prettiest girls closest to the camera. Michael and Charlie arrive from their trailers and run their lines as socials drift into their sight lines challenging their concentration on pages of dialogue. Oliver yells, "Action" as the extras aggressively jockey for face time. Charlie is not having an easy day and they do take after take. My corporate husband Chuck Pfieffer has gotten his real girlfriend Lisa Crosby in the film and my marriage has become a threesome.

Sensing our concern of not making it onto the silver screen Oliver tells his first assistant director to seat a dinner table with Susan Hess, Jill Fairchild, Prince Dimitri, Chuck Pfieffer, Grace Meigher and Mario Calvo-Platero. He directs us to chat with each other turning left and right as the camera closely pans past our faces.

Elsewhere on the set are John Buffalo Mailer, as Shia's character's best friend, Austin Pendleton, 94-year-old Eli Wallach and Natalie Morales. Also in this film are: the magnificent Frank Langella, as Shia's boss, who throws himself in front of a train early in the film, Susan Sarandon as Shia's real-estate broker mother, Sylvia Miles, who reprises her hilarious cameo as another real-estate agent and Jean Pigozzi as an international banker.

Lunch is called at 4 p.m. and Michael Douglas takes seven heavily made-up and bejeweled women including

Susan, Jill and me to a restaurant around the corner. Gordon Gekko hosts a hen party talking about children, schools, country houses and vacations.

Back on the set Oliver is shooting the actual dinner. Assistant directors ask for volunteers to dance to the live music. Prince Dimitri twirls and dips Jackie Weld. Kelly Klein, in her own Karl Lagerfeld sheer black organza, watches from a table with scattered champagne glasses half-filled with apple juice along with her 86-year-old father, Tulley Rector. Charlie Sheen leaves for LA and Shia is very annoyed he was not introduced to his hero. Carrie Mulligan, costumed like Audrey Hepburn, chats with us between takes.

The final set up is a long tracking shot of Josh Brolin and his wife as they triumphantly enter the ball. It is close to 9 p.m. and Lord William Astor arrives to pick me up for Amalia Dayan and Adam Lindemann's dinner for artists uptown.

Oliver is introduced to William and delights in calling him Lord as he immediately moves him into the top of the shot and instructs him to tell Eli Wallach, "We must do lunch". Ever the proper English gentleman, William advises Oliver that Lords do not use American slang and improvises his own lines. The tracking shot continues for numerous takes following Josh and Noelle as every VIP extra gets another shot at instant stardom with one-line greetings.

At last, “It’s a wrap” is screamed after 10 p.m. Prince Dimitri tells The Wall Street Journal it was, "a day of electrifying glamour," and “the longest gala of my life. I was in black tie for thirteen hours."

November 25, Tommy Gun Salon, Ludlow Street, last day of shooting

Donald Trump is on set at 7 a.m. ready for his close up. He is trying to make a mid-day departure on his jet from Teterboro with wife Melania and son Baron for Thanksgiving weekend in Palm Beach. Back in September, Oliver had invited Donald Trump to dinner at "21" to meet his leading men Josh and Shia so they could observe New York's most charismatic powerbroker in his natural environment.

The scene is London so the grey skies are perfect. Gekko has moved abroad to make his financial comeback. The scene opens on the back of his head in a barber's chair as he watches the financial news on TV. The camera pulls back and Gordon Gekko is finally revealed as the powerful bull he once was in an exquisite suit and signature slicked-back hair. Donald Trump walks into the shop for a cut and the banter begins about the money market. From his chair, Donald leans into Michael and suggests a "comb over" like his famous do. Gekko, with a slight grin, says, "No thanks Donald, I am a gel man."

The crew is yucking it up and Donald feels great. Paparazzi shoot the whole scene with long lenses from across the street. The unit publicist is helpless to keep this under wraps. Donald emerges, poses and gives interviews. Michael comes out, and the press think they have a scoop on the ending. Gekko is back in all his lovable titan splendor. Full-page photos of Michael and Donald run the next day in the tabloids. Never underestimate Oliver Stone’s surprise endings.

Twentieth Century Fox releases "Wall Street 2: The Money Never Sleeps" on April 23rd and it's got hit written all over it.

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From: Jeffrey Epstein [jeevacation@gmail.com]
Sent: 1/12/2010 11:18:58 AM
To: Peggy Siegal [[redacted]]
Subject: Re: My Wall Street 2 Story

sorry you are sick, go slow.. no cleaning. stay in bed.. sorry..

On Tue, Jan 12, 2010 at 6:17 AM, Peggy Siegal <[redacted]> wrote:

> Will call you later. I am sick as a dog with a cold. I am supposed to go to Dr. Magnani this morning for a cleaning. If you get a cleaning with a cold does it make it worse of just infect the dental hygenist?
>
> Had a great lunch for Woody Harrelson and Ben Foster for "The Messenger" at Monkey Bar yesterday and hung with Clooney at the New York Film Critics Awards last night. Tonight is the National Board of Review and I am thinking of staying in bed till show time. Have a party for Clooney Wednesday nigh Graydon is hosting at Monkey Bar that we are working on.
>
> I have to fly to LA Jan. 14 and I am worried...I have emailed three doctors this morning!
>
> Will call later...Mattie keeps saying she is going to show me how to email photos- will try to do today and call.
>
> I think I got sick in economy class from Lamu, Nairobi, Amsterdan, Newark from all those wanna be terrorists breathing on me in the planes.
>
> Did you see "Avator". I do not have a dvd because it's 3D.
> The white American marines are wiped out by black people painted blue....it's going to be highest grossing film in the world is an few weeks beating out "Titanic" and will win the Oscar for "Best Picture."
> xoxo Peg
>
> ----- Original Message -----
> From: Jeffrey Epstein <jeevacation@gmail.com>
> To: Peggy Siegal
> Sent: Mon Jan 11 19:28:25 2010
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Alan Loeb was brought in for a rewrite. Pressman asked me to meet Loeb at the Carlyle Hotel to explain the social rhythms of New York's financial high society. Whereas Gekko's character was modeled after '70s junk bond kings (Michael Milken) and '80s mergers and acquisitions killers (Henry Kravis), Loeb bases the new villain on hedge fund billionaires like John Paulson and Mike Novogratz, geniuses who have created stratospheric wealth beyond Gordon Gekko's wildest dreams. When Oliver Stone agreed to direct, he rewrote a portion of the script to focus on bankers as well as hedge funders, taking no screen credit.

This past September, Oliver yelled, "action" as Gordon Gekko, with long grey hair, comes back to life as he emerges from a lengthy prison stint shot outside of Sing Sing in Ossining, New York. Gekko is desperate to redefine himself in a different era. The New York Post runs a full-page photo of Gekko and New Yorkers immediately become obsessed with the filming of Wall Street 2.

A week into shooting, a glorious fall day. Ed Pressman invites me on the set at the Central Park Zoo. Oliver designs an elaborate tracking shot around the seal pool where Gekko, fresh from jail, walks and talks to Jake Moore, a young idealistic investment banker played by Shia LaBoeuf. They discuss Gekko's daughter Winnie, Moore's fiancée, played by Carrie Mulligan, who is also having an off-screen romance with LaBoeuf. Oliver played Cupid. Moore invites Gekko to the Alzheimer's Ball at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Gekko, who used to be a sponsor or honoree of such events, cannot even afford a ticket.

The shot starts with a barking seal jumping for fish, then pans down to the actors. Extras weave in and out. In one take Michael makes a wrong turn and ends up at the monkey house. Everyone laughs. The atmosphere on the set is courteous but quick and tense. There is pressure when you are making a sequel to a hit.

I watch the action on monitors while sitting on the producers' canvas chairs with Pressman, Eric Kopeloff ("Monsters Ball") and Celia Costas, who was a location manager on the first "Wall Street." They have asked me to be an extra in the Alzheimer's Ball scene and bring some friends to play rich Upper East Side socialites. Oliver wants over the top glam, go-to-the-vault jewels and couture gowns. "Give me the night before the Titanic goes down," were his exact words. Not a problem.

I pay a quick visit to Michael in his trailer on Fifth Avenue where he is resting. We go way back. I was his personal publicist when he won the Golden Globe and Oscar for Best Actor for "Wall Street" and we have remained great friends. Gekko is just as challenging for him the second time because of endless pages of technical financial dialogue. We discuss Catherine Zeta-Jones' Broadway debut in a "Little Night Music." Michael has a stack of partially finished handwritten thank you notes next to him for gifts received for their shared birthday party on September 25th at the St. Regis. Her 40th and his 65th.

I tell him I have been cast as an extra in two scenes and he laughs knowing I am desperate to hang around him and the production.

8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, October 21st, another warm, stunning fall day. I report to the wardrobe trailer on 65th Street and Madison Avenue. I carry four elaborate cocktail dresses and bags of matching accessories. My hair is in rollers. Statuesque Julia Koch walks over from her Park Avenue apartment carrying her white Valentino and long diamond earrings. Her real-life financial titan husband David is unaware where she is this morning.

Vanity Fair's keeper of the Best Dressed List, Amy Fine Collins, arrives totally organized in turquoise vintage Geoffrey Beene, and Vogue's fashion editor Hamish Bowles wears a riot of plaids, patterns and a large yellow fake flower on his lapel. Costume Designer Ellen Mirojnick, who created Gordon Gekko's rich slick look in the first film, is ecstatic with the extras I invited.

Oliver is shooting a scene with Josh Brolin (the star of Stone's "W"). His character Bretton (never Bret) James, a ruthless Wall Street kingpin, and his perfect wife Samantha (Noelle Beck) are hosting a benefit piano recital for a 13-year-old child prodigy in their huge, art-filled townhouse at 41 East 65th Street. The building actually belongs to Baby Jane Holzer, a wealthy art collector still famous for hanging with Andy Warhol in the '60s. The production designer had Jane's fabulous Warhols moved to storage and replaced with matching photographic copies. Very expensive contemporary art is again an important production element of Oliver's vision.

At 10:30 a.m., all the extras are placed around the living room set. Oliver's French mother, Jacqueline Stone, and her friend Monique Van Vooren, both in their 80s, are seated in front of the fireplace chatting in French. Production assistants fuss over them. Debonair macho man Chuck Pfieffer, who appeared in the original film, and I immediately invent a back story—I am his corporate wife—and we position ourselves on a couch next to the director's mother. Julia gets the best spot close to the piano and Amy, Hamish and decorator Geoffrey Bradfield are right behind her. Josh is brought in and the kibitzing stops.

Oliver appears on the set with eagle eyes and a sly grin and quickly re-positions everyone. He explains the scene, gives out lines to his favored extras, and on his way out to the monitors in the next room mentions that my earrings are too small. Wardrobe jumps. Josh rehearses and Oliver finally yells, "Action." The kid plays the piano, Josh explains why we are in his home, asks for money, the camera dollies as extras say their lines and Shia appears at the door uninvited for a confrontation with Josh. Three hours later a PA yells, "Lunch".

In costume, Amy, Hamish and I run to The Monkey Bar. I am late to meet "The Harpies," including Liz Smith, Barbara Walters, Cynthia McFadden, Nora Ephron, Jennifer Isham, Maury Perl and Beth Kseniak.

Graydon Carter is at the next table. I tell him Oliver Stone wants him in "Wall Street 2" as an extra. (I make this up.) Graydon jokes that he only works with lines. I say, "Not a problem." (This will be news to Oliver.)

Back on the set I tell Oliver that Graydon is willing to be in the film with lines. Oliver finds that intriguing.

Oliver shoots the piano recital scene over and over again from different angles all afternoon. Financial wizard Don Marron saunters on the set to visit and Oliver spontaneously puts him in a scene chatting with Josh. Carrie Mulligan hangs out watching boyfriend Shia work.

At sundown Julia Koch has to race from reel to real life and explain to her husband where she has been all day. (He loves it.)

Chuck Pfieffer plants a "Page Six" item and the next day socialites begin calling me to get into the film.

Thursday, November 5, Shun Lee Restaurant, West 65th Street

Oliver shoots a crowded tight interior scene with Michael, Carrie and Shia, who are having an intimate Chinese dinner. Spontaneously, Oliver decides this is the perfect scene for Graydon Carter. After a flurry of calls, Graydon arrives on set, and playing himself, sashays by the table. Gekko jumps up to say hello and Graydon brushes him off with a few dismissive lines.

Monday, November 9, 25 Broadway

One hundred swells show up at the former Canard Shipping building, a massive Italianate hall, at the crack of dawn for the Alzheimer’s Ball, a grand charity event.

Susan Hess and I are chauffeured downtown with our Vera Wang gowns and report to the VIP extra holding area where we join Prince Dimitri of Yugoslavia in a bespoke dinner jacket, journalist Christopher Mason, songstress Yanna Avis, photographer Kelly Klein, art dealer Larry Gagosian's girl friend Shala Monroque in see-through Rodarte, beauty executive Olivia Chantecaille, producer Lawrence Robins, author Jackie Weld Drake, Vogue film critic Joan Juliet Buck, fashion consultant Jill Fairchild, CNN’s Felicia Taylor and Italian newsman Mario Calvo-Platero.

Ellen Mirojnick and her costume department have assembled racks of the most expensive elaborate designer gowns and work at break neck speed styling while we wildly strip to our undies in a makeshift dressing area. Ellen pours me into a black tulle Marchesa with a enormous wired silver bow. Twenty hairdressers and make-up artists systematically work on 250 extras. A mile of tables are alternately filled with steaming coffee, fattening breakfast foods, hair sprays, mirrors, shoes and jewelry. It’s a madhouse of excitement.

We are led to the part of the set used for the cocktail reception and placed around Michael Douglas and Charlie Sheen stand-ins. Charlie has been flown in from LA for half a day's work to reprise his original character. He is now the highest paid television actor commanding two million dollars an episode of “Two and a Half Men.”

Oliver arrives on the set greeting, examining, tweaking the shot and always pulling the prettiest girls closest to the camera. Michael and Charlie arrive from their trailers and run their lines as socials drift into their sight lines challenging their concentration on pages of dialogue. Oliver yells, "Action" as the extras aggressively jockey for face time. Charlie is not having an easy day and they do take after take. My corporate husband Chuck Pfieffer has gotten his real girlfriend Lisa Crosby in the film and my marriage has become a threesome.

Sensing our concern of not making it onto the silver screen Oliver tells his first assistant director to seat a dinner table with Susan Hess, Jill Fairchild, Prince Dimitri, Chuck Pfieffer, Grace Meigher and Mario Calvo-Platero. He directs us to chat with each other turning left and right as the camera closely pans past our faces.

Elsewhere on the set are John Buffalo Mailer, as Shia's character's best friend, Austin Pendleton, 94-year-old Eli Wallach and Natalie Morales. Also in this film are: the magnificent Frank Langella, as Shia’s boss, who throws himself in front of a train early in the film, Susan Sarandon as Shia’s real-estate broker mother, Sylvia Miles, who reprises her hilarious cameo as another real-estate agent and Jean Pigozzi as an international banker.

Lunch is called at 4 p.m. and Michael Douglas takes seven heavily made-up and bejeweled women including Susan, Jill and me to a restaurant around the corner. Gordon Gekko hosts a hen party talking about children, schools, country houses and vacations.

Back on the set Oliver is shooting the actual dinner. Assistant directors ask for volunteers to dance to the live music. Prince Dimitri twirls and dips Jackie Weld. Kelly Klein, in her own Karl Lagerfeld sheer black organza, watches from a table with scattered champagne glasses half-filled with apple juice along with her 86-year-old father, Tulley Rector. Charlie Sheen leaves for LA and Shia is very annoyed he was not introduced to his hero. Carrie Mulligan, costumed like Audrey Hepburn, chats with us between takes.

The final set up is a long tracking shot of Josh Brolin and his wife as they triumphantly enter the ball. It is close to 9 p.m. and Lord William Astor arrives to pick me up for Amalia Dayan and Adam Lindemann's dinner for artists uptown.

Oliver is introduced to William and delights in calling him Lord as he immediately moves him into the top of the shot and instructs him to tell Eli Wallach, "We must do lunch". Ever the proper English gentleman, William advises Oliver that Lords do not use American slang and improvises his own lines. The tracking shot continues for numerous takes following Josh and Noelle as every VIP extra gets another shot at instant stardom with one-line greetings.

At last, “It’s a wrap” is screamed after 10 p.m. Prince Dimitri tells The Wall Street Journal it was, "a day of electrifying glamour," and “the longest gala of my life. I was in black tie for thirteen hours."

November 25, Tommy Gun Salon, Ludlow Street, last day of shooting

Donald Trump is on set at 7 a.m. ready for his close up. He is trying to make a mid-day departure on his jet from Teterboro with wife Melania and son Baron for Thanksgiving weekend in Palm Beach. Back in September, Oliver had invited Donald Trump to dinner at "21" to meet his leading men Josh and Shia so they could observe New York's most charismatic powerbroker in his natural environment.

The scene is London so the grey skies are perfect. Gekko has moved abroad to make his financial comeback. The scene opens on the back of his head in a barber's chair as he watches the financial news on TV. The camera pulls back and Gordon Gekko is finally revealed as the powerful bull he once was in an exquisite suit and signature slicked-back hair. Donald Trump walks into the shop for a cut and the banter begins about the money market. From his chair, Donald leans into Michael and suggests a "comb over" like his famous do. Gekko, with a slight grin, says, "No thanks Donald, I am a gel man."

The crew is yucking it up and Donald feels great. Paparazzi shoot the whole scene with long lenses from across the street. The unit publicist is helpless to keep this under wraps. Donald emerges, poses and gives interviews. Michael comes out, and the press think they have a scoop on the ending. Gekko is back in all his lovable titan splendor. Full-page photos of Michael and Donald run the next day in the tabloids. Never underestimate Oliver Stone’s surprise endings.

Twentieth Century Fox releases "Wall Street 2: The Money Never Sleeps" on April 23rd and it's got hit written all over it.

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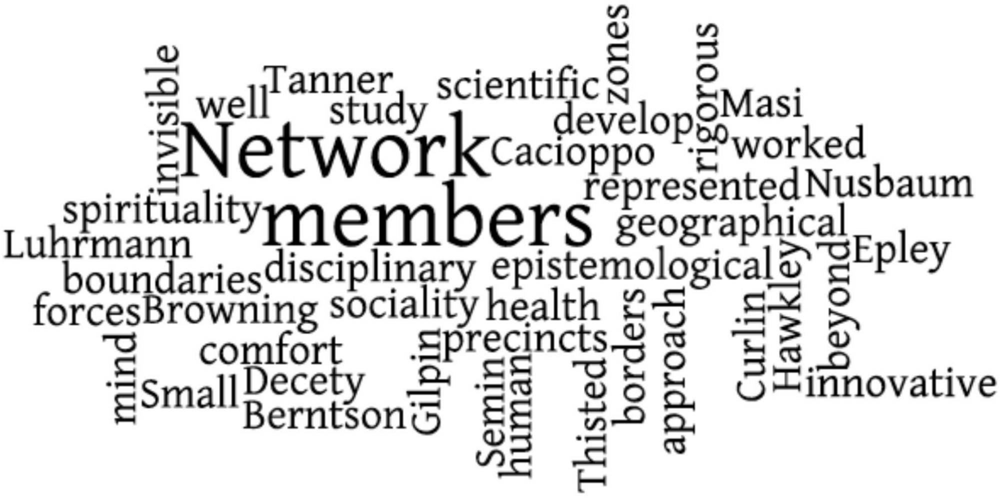
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Invisible Forces and Powerful Beliefs: Gravity, Gods, and Minds

By the

Chicago Social Brain Network

FT Press
Upper Saddle River, NJ

Invisible Forces and Unseen Powers:
Gravity, Gods, and Minds

Preface

1. Invisible Forces Operating on Human Bodies

Gravity is an invisible force that holds us to the surface of the earth, and the fact that gravity is invisible does not place it beyond scientific scrutiny. Similarly, humans are a quintessentially social species whose need for social connection produces invisible forces on our brain, behavior, and biology that are subject to scientific investigation. Among these are forces that compel us to seek trusting and meaningful connections with others and to seek meaning and connection with something bigger than ourselves. The story of these invisible forces speaks to who we are as a species.

From Selfish Genes to Social Brains

2. The Social Nature of Humankind

The human brain has evolved under the guidance of selfish genes to produce more than a brain that is capable of powerful, isolated information processing operations. The human brain also evolved with inherent capacities for social cognition, compassion, empathy, bonding, coordination, cooperation, values, mortality and a need for social connection that extends beyond kin and even other individuals.

From Inclusive Fitness to Spiritual Striving

3. Science, Religion, and a Revised Religious Humanism

The dialogue between science and religion, if properly pursued, can usher in a new era of religious humanism in the leading world religions. Their central beliefs and practices largely would remain intact, but their views of nature and their concerns with health and well-being would be refined through their conversations with the sciences. How this model would work is discussed in terms of the relation between love and health in Christian theology – especially the tension between the agape, caritas, and eros models of Christian love.

The Status of the Body Politic and the Status of the Body Itself

4. Health by Connection: From Social Brains to Resilient Bodies

Most people feel socially connected most of the time. Felt connectedness is typically taken for granted, but the effects of its absence, as experienced in feelings of isolation, demonstrate that our evolutionary heritage as a social species has potent implications for health and well-being.

From Relationships to People and Groups to Relationships with God

5. Psychosomatic Relations: From Superstition to Mortality

It has long been recognized that mental states can impact health and well being, but the causal pathways have only recently begun to be understood. Thoughts, beliefs and attitudes can have powerful effects on physiological functions, health and disease. Examples range from superstitious beliefs associated with voodoo, bone pointing, or other black rituals to the more positive states associated with spirituality. The present essay considers these disparate psychological states and how they might translate into physiological effects having real health implications.

The Mind and Body Are One

6. The Suspension of Individual Consciousness and the Dissolution of Self and Other Boundaries

A special case of social interaction concerns two or more individuals engaging in temporally coordinated actions that imply particular timing patterns such as synchrony or rhythmic turn taking such as applauding in unison or the 'wave' that is produced by thousands of individual sports fans in a stadium. A model to explain such synchronized behavior is proposed in terms of the neural processes that are jointly recruited. One of the main implications suggested by this model is that taking part in or being part of a synchronized social interaction gives rise to a qualitative shift in subjective experience due to the difficulty of applying an individual centered explanation to collectively produced spontaneous co-action.

You and I as One

7. Action at a Distance: The Invisible Force of Language

Language forms the fabric of our social institutions and makes tangible the nature of our relationships. Although the function of language is typically viewed in terms of the information content that it provides, some of the social function of language may depend on the way it affects us. The idea of language impact – how language directly affects our emotions and social connections – may be fundamental to the way the social brain functions to connect people.

Systems and Signals for Social

Coordination

8. Hidden Forces in Understanding Others: Mirror Neurons and Neurobiological Underpinnings

Specific brain regions in the monkey contain individual brain cells, or neurons, that respond to both observation and execution of identical hand and mouth actions. Brain imaging in humans has demonstrated that our brains have similarly localized regions with similar properties. These areas respond to execution of goal-directed actions of the hand and mouth and during observation of the same or similar actions. Interestingly, these brain regions in the human are also responsive to observation and imitation of facial movements, and appear to be sensitive to their emotional content.

Connecting and Binding Social Brains and Minds

9. Empathy and Interpersonal Sensitivity

Empathy is thought to play a key role in motivating prosocial behavior, guiding our preferences and behavioral responses, and providing the affective and motivational base for moral development. While folk conceptions of empathy view it as the capacity to share, understand and respond with care to the affective states of others, neuroscience research demonstrates that these components can be dissociated. Empathy is not a unique characteristic of human consciousness, but it is an important adaptive behavior that evolved with the mammalian brain. However, humans are special in the sense that high-level cognitive abilities (language, theory of mind, executive functions) are layered on top of phylogenetically older social and emotional capacities. These higher level cognitive and social capacities expand the range of behaviors that can be driven by empathy.

Seeing into My Mind and Other Minds

10. Seeing Invisible Minds

Other minds are inherently invisible. Being able to "see" them requires learning about other minds, attending to other minds, and projecting one's own mind onto others, and seeing minds in other agents can mean the difference between treating others as humans versus as objects.

Inferring Minds When None Can be Seen

11. Anthropomorphism: Human Connection to a Universal Society

The human motivation for social connection extends beyond the boundary of the human in the (often misunderstood) religious language of anthropomorphism. In this chapter, an infamous sermon from colonial America—“Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God”—is used to illustrate the way anthropomorphic language works to incorporate human society in a web of ethical obligations that connect to the natural environment and, by imaginative extension, to the universe as a whole.

Personifications of God

12. How Does God Become Real

Becoming a person of faith is not so much about acquiring certain beliefs but about learning to use one’s mind in particular ways; the often intensely private experience of God is built through a profoundly social learning process.

Belief and Connection

13. Theological Perspectives on God as an Invisible Force

The beliefs that religious individuals hold about the way God operates in human life are potential factors affecting perceived social isolation. My paper discusses a specific type of such belief that is common in the history of Christian thought: the belief that God is an invisible force of a rather impersonal sort working for the good in everything that happens. The paper argues that this sort of belief has as great or greater potential than belief in God as a personal friend to give one the sense that one is never alone, but the conception of God as pervasive can also lead to inattention and disconnection.

The Elusiveness of Meaningful Connection

14. Visible Efforts to Change Invisible Connections

Despite the human need for social connection, many individuals are lonely because they are unable to create meaningful social bonds. Interventions designed to reduce loneliness have not been successful, suggesting that a better understanding of loneliness, social connection, and the obstacles to forming meaningful connections with others is needed.

Reflections on Invisible Connections

15. Social Brain, Spiritual Medicine?

Science and religion are inextricably intertwined in the practice of medicine. Science has provided modern medicine with extraordinary diagnostic and therapeutic capacities that can be employed to care for patients. Religions provide a fuller vision for the worthiness of caring for the sick, a framework to guide the application of medical science in that endeavor, and practices that strengthen the human capacity for treating patients as the mindful persons they are.

Invisible Forces

16. Epilogue

Invisible forces that connect individuals to society, or to each other, have effects at both ends of the connection. As humans we are fundamentally individual and fundamentally social. We encompass both the pursuit of rational self interest of *Homo economicus* and the pursuit of approval, belonging, and intimacy of *Homo socialis,* the former grounded in *eros,* the latter in *agape*. These forces acting together represent a signature feature of *Homo sapiens* (the wise ones) and have contributed a record of influence and impact– both positive and negative –that is unmatched in biology.

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Preface

We view our past through a reverse telescope, making it seem like contemporary events are a much larger part of our history than they are. Hominids have been estimated to have evolved about 7 million years ago, with our species having evolved only within approximately the last 1% of that period. The human brain was sculpted by evolutionary forces over tens of thousands of years, whereas the human achievements we take for granted, such as civilizations, law, and art, have emerged only during the past few thousands of years. A mere 300 years ago, theology and philosophy were the principal disciplinary lenses through which the world was viewed, and from which explanations and instruction were sought. Advances in science over the past 300 years have transformed how we think, act, and live. Nearly every aspect of human existence, ranging from agriculture, commerce, and transportation to technology, communication, and medicine, has been transformed by contemporary science. We have no hesitation to accept scientific explanations of physical entities being influenced by invisible forces such as gravity, magnetism, and genes. But when human mentation and behavior are the objects to be explained, deterministic scientific accounts seem to many to be less satisfying.

For some, science and modernity are akin to the apple in the Garden of Eden, responsible for our fall from Grace. For others, theology and religion represent little more than the stuff of superstition with no place in an educated society.

About six years ago, we had the opportunity to create a most unusual group of scholars to examine questions about the invisible forces acting on, within, and between human bodies. Superb scholars who individually had made major contributions to their own disciplinary field – fields as divergent as neuroscience and medicine to philosophy and theology – were invited to form an interdisciplinary network of scholars to consider such questions. The development of these discussions even over the first few meetings truly astonished us all. We decided to share what we learned through the present book, which represents a different perspective, one in which our understanding of human nature is enriched by serious insights and scrutiny that each perspective has to offer. Theology and religion have always relied on unseen forces as the basis for explanations of human behavior and experience. Science has been able to explicate those forces even if along different lines than originally conceived. As we start to consider some of the more complex aspects of human nature, science and theology may be able to work together to shed light on some of these complexities.

We begin this preface and each chapter with a word cloud produced using Wordle at http://www.wordle.net. In the case of this preface, it illustrates key concepts that are found in this book. In the case of the chapters, the word cloud in each provides a visualization of the key terms and ideas expressed in that chapter. Each chapter, in turn, represents a contribution led by a particular member to the network but broadened to reflect the interactions of the network on that topic. Perusal of the word clouds across chapters makes the flow of ideas more visible. Together, the chapters speak to who we are as a species and the nature of the invisible forces that make us such a unique species. For instance, humans seem to strive for social connections in a variety of ways from friendships to identification with groups to religious affiliations. A major thesis of this book is that we are fundamentally a social species, and that this journey is less a march toward isolation and autonomy than it is a march to competence, interdependence, coordination, cooperation, and social resilience. Guiding us through this journey are our social brains, which have evolved to create anything but a blank slate at birth.

We owe a debt of thanks to many for their contributions and support over the years, but we owe special thanks to Barnaby Marsh for approaching us with the idea of forming such a network and for his many contributions to the network, and to the John Templeton Foundation for their support and for their encouragement to pursue questions, ideas, and conclusions of our science regardless of where they led.

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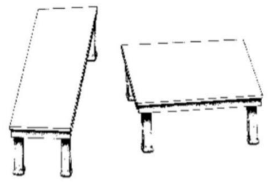
Chapter 1[1]
Invisible Forces Operating on Human Bodies

We may believe we know why we think, feel, and act as we do, but various forces influence us in ways that are largely invisible to our senses. Gravity is an invisible force that holds us to the surface of the earth, and magnetism is an invisible force that we use in everyday life. The fact that gravity and magnetism are invisible to us does not place them beyond scientific scrutiny. Similarly, there are a host of forces that, over the course of human evolution, have emerged to influence our thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. Because many of these forces are elemental, we will be dealing with an area of human behavior that has also been addressed for centuries by various religions. Among these are forces that compel us to seek trusting and meaningful connections with others and to seek meaning and connection with something larger than ourselves. The story of these invisible forces speaks to who we are and what our potential might be as a species. In short, it is the story of the human mind.

The mind can be thought of as the structure and processes responsible for cognition, emotion, and behavior. It is now widely recognized that many structures and processes of the mind operate outside of awareness, with only the end products reaching awareness, and then only sometimes. But clearly we know a great deal about the mind from what we experience through our senses. It is just commonsense that we know the shape or color of an object from simply seeing it.

Or do we? It is obvious that the tops of the tables depicted in the top panel of Figure 1 differ in size and shape. You may be surprised to learn that your mind is fooling you, that the tops of the table are precisely the same size and shape. If you don't believe it, trace and cut a piece of paper the size of one table top and then place it over the other. Self-evident truths can sometimes be absolutely false.



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[1] The Chicago Social Brain Network is a group of more than a dozen scholars from the neurosciences, behavioral sciences, social sciences, and humanities who share an interest in who we are as a species and the role of biological and social factors in the shaping of individuals, institutions, and societies across human history.

The scientists and scholars in the Network differ in background, epistemologies, beliefs, and methods. After five years of working together, we found a common set of themes to have emerged in our work despite the differences among us. These themes, which provide a different perspective on how we might think about human history, experience, and spirituality, are examined here and explored in more detail in subsequent chapters.

The science of the mind is not unique in this regard. As the historian Daniel Boorstin (1983, *1*) noted:

> Nothing could be more obvious than that the earth is stable and unmoving, and that we are the center of the universe. Modern Western science takes its beginning from the denial of this commonsense axiom . . . Common sense, the foundation of everyday life, could no longer serve for the governance of the world. When "scientific" knowledge, the sophisticated product of complicated instruments and subtle calculations, provided unimpeachable truths, things were no longer as they seemed." (p. 294)

And just as the observation that we roam on stable ground led to the incorrect inference that we are the center of the universe, so too is the modern notion that the human brain is a solitary, autonomous instrument whose connections with other brains is a matter of deliberate choice and of no real import.

The human brain, the organ of the mind, is housed deep within the cranial vault, where it is protected and isolated from others, so it may seem obvious that the brain is a solitary information processing device that has no special means of connecting with other brains. But we are fundamentally a social species. Faces, expressive displays, and human speech receive preferential processing in neonate as well as adult brains. When a person feels rejected by others, their brain shows the same pattern of activation as when they are exposed to a physically painful stimulus. Permit a person to cooperate with others, and their brain shows the same pattern of activation as when they are given a rich reward such as delicious food or drink. We may not be aware of it, but human evolution has sculpted a human need for social connection, along with neural circuits and hormonal processes that enable and promote communication and connection across brains. As we shall see in the chapters to follow, our sociality is an important part of who we are as a species and it plays an important though often invisible role in the operations of our brain and our biology. Among the questions we examine is whether our social brain also contributes to the ubiquitous human quest for spirituality.

The Chicago Social Brain Network

For hundreds of years, theology and philosophy were the hub disciplines of scholarship, and other fields of inquiry orbited around this dyad and were tightly constrained by it. Over the past three centuries, the sciences have come into their own, displacing theology and philosophy at the center of the academic universe. In so doing, they have produced extraordinary advances in everyday life. People may reminisce about the good old days, but thanks to science and technology the amount of total income spent on the necessities of food, clothing, and shelter dropped from 80% in 1901 to 50% in 2002/2003. Yet there remains an inchoate sense that something is missing in our lives, something intangible and elusive. Science has improved our material lives, but improvements in material life may not be enough to optimize human well being.

Can these two very different ways of seeing the world be used synergistically to shed new light on the human mind? In the Fall of 2004, we established an ongoing network of more than a dozen scholars unbounded by disciplinary precincts, geographical borders, or methodological perspectives to set aside antagonisms that had grown up between science and humanities in order to explore this question. These Network scholars hail from disciplines as disparate as psychology, neurology, theology, statistics, philosophy, internal medicine, anthropology, and sociology. Each of these scholars was well known in their own field and were busy with other obligations, but it was the opportunity to achieve a deeper, more comprehensive discussion of the human mind that made it worth the time and effort it required to be part of the Network.

Although various members of the Network interact on a daily or weekly basis, the entire Network convenes twice annually for a four-day retreat to discuss each other's research, to critique each other and to learn from one other. Scientific analyses characterized by rigorous experimental designs and data analytic strategies are interlaced with rich philosophical, theological, and historical analyses of the same questions about invisible forces that act on us all. The dialogue between the Network scientists and the scholars from the humanities and theology is bidirectional. For instance, the beliefs and behavior described in the humanities and theology are rich in hypotheses that can now be tested empirically, and the measures and methods of the behavioral sciences and neurosciences now permit rigorous investigation of some of these hypotheses. Each of the Network members brings a unique perspective to the study of the human mind, and the provocative story of the mind that is emerging from the collective efforts of the Network is the subject of this book.

The Network is unconventional in other ways, as well. Traditionally, scientists and scholars work together to achieve a common understanding and a consensus position. We quickly learned that we did not need to come to a consensus to benefit tremendously from the dialogue on the capacity and motivation for the ubiquitous human quest for sociality and spirituality. For instance, there is no consensus within the Network on whether there is a God, and we do not seek here to provide the final word on what science and the humanities each have to say to the other about the human mind. Instead, our purpose is to illustrate the possibility and importance of engaging others whose views we may not share in a serious dialogue on such topics. Among the lessons we as a Network have learned are:

1. that some questions about human nature and our social and spiritual aspirations have been asked by humankind for thousands of years. Accordingly, there may be more to be gained from engaging in a collaborative process of thinking about these questions than from demanding simple and immediate answers. We discuss what we see as possible answers to questions about our nature and strivings, but the value in stating these positions is to have clear positions from which to move thinking and research forward. Thus, our purpose in writing this book is to articulate ideas to be shaped and refined, not to provide the final word.

2. that one need not agree with a position to perform a deep and thorough analysis of the arguments for and against the position. Objectivity in thought and analysis are keys to reaching a deep understanding of a topic. By taking a position, developing arguments for and against the position, then taking the opposite position and doing likewise, we develop the capacity to be more dispassionate and powerful thinkers – and gain deeper insight into a topic.
3. that one need not reach agreement with someone to learn a great deal from discussions with them or to make significant advances in addressing a complex question. The salve of affirmation can lead us to seek like-minded others and to denigrate and avoid those who disagree with us. Although this may provide temporary comfort, it does little to help address deep divisions or solve problems with which we must deal in an increasingly complex and diverse world. There are inherent tensions between the sciences and the humanities, and these tensions have led to a polarization of views, an "it's my way or the highway" approach toward those holding divergent points of view. The contents of this book illustrate an alternative possibility. The Network is a very interdisciplinary group, and the perspectives captured in the subsequent chapters reflect some of the same tensions with which other books dealing with science and religion have dealt – and from which they have not benefitted. The tensions reflect deep and enduring differences in the way in which scholars in the humanities, the social sciences, and the sciences think about theory, methods, and evidence. These differences can test one's mettle but if acknowledged, respected, embraced, and pursued, they result in a richer, more innovative and synergistic collaborative effort. In the case of our Network, this was neither easy nor quick, but it was achieved through a mutual respect and exchange of ideas and a shared conviction regarding the importance of the Network's combination of approaches from the humanities and the sciences. In a sense, our Network is a microcosm of the structure that exists in our society. If these tensions are embraced and used to their full catapultic effect, one can make progress on serious problems, transforming not only how we think about the problem, but also how we think about those who hold different or opposing views.
4. that the insights or advances we can achieve need not be our or our opponent's position, or a less-than optimal compromise between the two, but rather they can be truly innovative, building on and transcending both initial positions. The specific forms of such creative and transcendent solutions are difficult to articulate in advance but there is a thought process – characterized by clarity, openness, constructive criticism, and synthesis – that

increases the likelihood one will reach such solutions. All of the perspectives discussed in this book have been transformed through this process.

Background

In pursuing the tandem lines of inquiry of science and the humanities, the Network itself serves as an example of the human capacities and emergent processes that can derive from collective social structures and actions. In the chapters to follow, the Network examines the nature and power of unseen forces ranging from human co-regulation to physiological effects of spiritual beliefs. The exchanges across disciplinary perspectives suggest that the "dominion of the solitary individual" is insufficient to understand the human mind or to optimize human health and well being. To understand human nature and the human mind, one may need to appreciate human needs and capabilities that have not been given due attention.

Homo sapiens are a social species, which means there are emergent organizations beyond individuals that contribute to the ability of our species to survive, reproduce, and care for our offspring sufficiently long that they too survive to reproduce. As a consequence, evolutionary forces have sculpted neural, hormonal, and genetic mechanisms that support these social structures. Among the possible consequences explored in this book are that: 1) people are not the entirely self-interested, short-term thinking, rational decision makers assumed by the mythical creature, *Homo economicus,* and 2) some of the amorphous dissatisfaction and chronic diseases that characterize contemporary society may be, in part, the consequence of the denial of the differences between the nature of these two beings. Existing scientific studies of religion have established the pervasiveness of religious beliefs and practices and an association between these beliefs or practices and physical as well as mental health. Religious beliefs and practices have also contributed to failures to heed life-saving medical advice and to the horrendous treatment of others. It will be through the serious investigation of such beliefs and practices, not through their denial, that we may ultimately be able to identify which aspects of these beliefs and practices are beneficial, for what individuals and in what contexts, and through what specific mechanisms.

Recent research has made it patently clear that William James (1890, p. 442, *2*) underestimated the faculties of human infants when he suggested that their first sensory experiences were a "blooming, buzzing confusion." But what James' sentiment did capture is the overwhelming complexity and uncertainty that exists in the child's environment, and the inherent difficulty in making sense of that complexity from scratch. Our drive to make meaning is irrepressible---and when we do not understand the forces that drive our actions, we invent narratives that make these invisible forces feel more predictable and understandable even if only in hindsight. But we do not do it alone.

Adults as well as children must explain the uncertainty and ambiguity of natural phenomena (calamities of weather, death and reproduction) as well as social phenomena (human agents) in order to operate effectively. But not all actions are perceived as being equivalent. Forces operating on objects to compel action, as when gravity causes rocks to slide down a mountain, are viewed as external causes. Forces operating on human bodies to produce action, in contrast, are viewed as reflective of purpose, driven not only by external causes but, more importantly, by abstract reasons such as goals, aspirations, and destiny. The meaning-making proclivities of humans are so irrepressible that when external forces operate on human bodies to produce a significant impact on humankind, even the causes of the actions of these human bodies tend to be regarded in terms of more abstract purposes and reasons. The anthropomorphic description of hurricanes is a case in point.

Actions of objects have causes, whereas actions of humans have reasons. Invisible forces that operate on humans but that appear to operate independent of human agency have been the subject of religious speculations for centuries. These invisible forces include: internal neural and biological forces (e.g., homeostatic processes, autonomic activity) that exert regulatory forces which are largely hidden from conscious experience or control; strong emotions that seem to arise apart from conscious human intention (e.g., rage, fear, empathy); phenomena such as dreams or hallucinations that seemingly operate independent from the human will; motivations, biases, inclinations, predilections (such as anthropomorphism, ambiguity avoidance, preference for simple explanations, etc.) whose presence is so universal that, like language, the capacities for their development or expression may have an evolutionary basis; individual beliefs (such as the belief that there is a reality outside our head/we are not dreaming; the belief in human freedom; in values such as equality, etc), attitudes, preferences, goals, or intentions; aggregated beliefs that result in social norms, values, religion, culture, and social movements; and codified forces such as decrees, rules, alliances, and laws.

Before the enlightenment of the 18th century, many scholars believed that thought was instantaneous and that action was governed by an indivisible mind separate from the body. If a palpable cause for a person's behavior could not be identified, the Divine or some counterpart constituted a more agreeable explanatory construct than invisible forces acting through scientifically specifiable mechanisms. Unparalleled advances in the sciences have occurred since the dawn of the Enlightenment, including the development of scientific theories about magnetism, gravity, quantum mechanics, and dark matter that depict invisible forces operating with measurable effects on physical bodies. During this same period, serious scientific research on invisible forces acting within, on and across human bodies was slowed and underfunded in part because the study of the human mind and behavior was regarded by many in the public and in politics as soft and of dubious validity. The result is that many still regard the mind and behavior as best understood in terms of the actions of non-scientific agents, such as a god or gods, and the manifestations of mental illness as the result of a failure of individual will – a denial of the possibility that invisible forces (that is, forces that are tractable scientifically but of which a person is not normally aware) can affect mind and behavior.

One could try to explain away the gap in scientific knowledge about invisible forces by referring to the conception of science and religion as systems of knowledge that are in opposition. This approach is common and evident in a spate of contemporary books that take the position that science and religion represent competing ways of understanding the world and that science (or religion) is the one and only valid way of understanding human behavior and the world around us (*3-8*). For instance, in *The God Delusion,* Richard Dawkins places specific Judeo-Christian theological doctrines under the scrutiny of science only to find that none passes scientific muster.

The vast majority of people from all educational backgrounds continue to harbor strong religious beliefs that affect their daily decisions and behavior, with both good and ill effects. These religious belief systems most commonly bump into scientific claims around invisible forces. When science opens up opportunities to improve the human condition by providing a more complete understanding of the causes of events, their measurable effects, and possible interventions– ranging from valid science education to medical advancements based on stem cell research – these opportunities are often threatened by the application of specific religious beliefs to these endeavors. Scientific research to understand religion and religious belief systems may be a more productive response than broad denouncements by scientists of any who hold such beliefs.

Conversely, when religion opens up opportunities for improving the human condition by questioning the emphasis on short-term self-interests at the expense of the collective, providing a more complete understanding of the human need to attribute meaning to events and their effects, and identifying possible interventions– ranging from the provision of tangible support to individuals in need, to the promotion of healthy lifestyles and ethical behavior– scientific research to understand these influences may again be a more productive response than broad denouncements by scientists that such beliefs are irrational. Indeed, the question of whether God exists is of much less scientific interest, and of much more questionable scientific merit (how would one scientifically falsify such a claim?), than the question of the causes, consequences, and underlying mechanisms for the observable human behaviors affected by invisible forces---whether they be physical (gravity), social (groups), or *perceived* spiritual (gods).

Contemporary science explains many of these phenomena but also points to the human capacities and emergent processes that derive from collective social structures and actions and, underlying the emergence of these structures, the human need for meaning-making and connecting to something beyond oneself. The dominant metaphor for the scientific study of the human mind during the latter half of the 20th century has been the computer – a solitary device with massive information processing capacities. Computers today are massively interconnected devices with capacities that extend far beyond the resident hardware and software of a solitary computer. The extended capacities made possible by the internet can be said to be *emergent* because they represent a whole that is greater than the simple sum of the actions that are possible by the sum of the individual (disconnected) computers that constitute the internet. The telereceptors (e.g., eyes, ears) of the human brain have provided wireless broadband interconnectivity to humans for millennia. Just as computers have capacities and processes that are transduced through but extend far beyond the hardware of a single computer, the human brain has evolved to promote social and cultural capacities and processes that are transduced through but that extend far beyond a solitary brain. To understand the full capacity of humans, one needs to appreciate not only the memory and computational power of the brain but its capacity for representing, understanding, and connecting with other individuals. That is, one needs to recognize that we have evolved a powerful, meaning making *social* brain.

Social species, by definition, create structures beyond the individual–structures ranging from dyads and families to institutions and cultures. These emergent structures have evolved hand in hand with neural and hormonal mechanisms to support them because the consequent social behaviors (e.g., cooperation, empathy, altruism, etc.) helped these organisms survive, reproduce, and care for offspring sufficiently long that they too reproduced. From an evolutionary perspective then, the social context is fundamental in the evolution and development of the human brain.

The observable consequences of these higher organizations have long been apparent, but we are only now beginning to understand their genetic, neural, and biochemical basis and consequences. To fully delve into these complex behaviors, science needs to deal with the invisible forces that shape human life, whether it is in the form of physical, biological, or psychological forces. For instance, anthropomorphism, the irrepressible proclivity to attribute human characteristics onto nonhuman objects to achieve meaning, predictability, and human connection, is beginning to be subjected to productive multi-level scientific analysis. Experimental studies have shown that manipulations which increase feelings of social isolation without the possibility of resolving these feelings through human interaction have the compensatory effect of increasing people's tendency to anthropomorphize, including heightened beliefs in God. This scientific work has implications for understanding claims regarding the success of religious practices such as solitude as paths to feeling closer God. Research on anthropomorphism has now identified developmental, situational, dispositional, and cultural factors that modulate people's tendency to anthropomorphize nonhuman agents ranging from technological gadgets to animals to gods, and the neural mechanisms underlying this transconfiguration of nonhuman objects into human-like agents are beginning to be revealed.

Guided by the insights from these new scientific theories of anthropomorphism, historical analyses may be worthwhile to determine whether concepts of god have changed across time and cultures such that god was created in the image of the believer rather than vice versa. Xenophanes (6th century B.C., cited in *9*), for instance, was apparently the first to use the term "anthropomorphism" when describing the similarities between religious agents and their believers, noting that Greek gods were invariably fair skinned and blue-eyed whereas African gods were invariably dark skinned and dark-eyed (joking that cows would surely worship gods that looked strikingly cow-like). Brain imaging research has confirmed that anthropomorphism is associated with the activation of the same prefrontal areas that are active when people think about themselves or project themselves onto others.

Conclusion

Just as critically, the study of invisible forces requires a discussion of the method that successful teams use to work together as they cross disciplinary boundaries. Over the past few decades, there has been a demonstrable shift from the individual genius as the source of scientific and scholarly breakthroughs to interdisciplinary teams. This shift in the production of cutting-edge knowledge has been documented in all fields of scholarly activity, ranging from mathematics and theoretical physics to the humanities. This shift has both made possible and been necessitated by a need to understand complex behaviors. Although this project is primarily about the ways that scientists seek to study the impact of invisible forces, it will also reflect the methodologies that these researchers use so that their work is not constrained by common knowledge.

The philosophy of science also looks different when dealing with simple causality (one-to-one relations) than with complex causality. Affirmation of the consequent, a logical error in which a given cause for an effect is inferred based on the observation of the effect, does not lead to a scientific error when there is but a single cause for the observed effect. However, as scientific inquiry addresses increasingly complex phenomena, and increasingly complexly determined phenomena, the philosophy of science needs to become more nuanced.

A core challenge is to develop a "science" of identification and aggregation of these invisible forces at different levels. Related research questions include why they exist, and measures of robustness. One of our central goals is to demonstrate not only that considerations of these forces matter, but that that they can matter *a lot*.

There also are questions of value and ethics that could be implicated: descriptive knowledge, models, awareness of causal relationships, and so on, might not be enough to answer some kinds of questions, especially those related to value and purpose, which are the very energies that animate and invigorate real human systems. Economics comes close with its proxy measure of value based on the distribution of scarce resources and people's varying need for these resources. But this theory comes up short in many instances where other values are at play that are beyond markets, such as in assessing the value of a human life, or whether all lives are of equal value. It is an especially poor model for helping us understand something as simple as the value of articles of sentimental value, such as family photographs, which may have little or no market value at all. Thus, how do we best understand the "sentiments" that are important in the real world?

The members of the Network have worked beyond the boundaries of disciplinary borders, geographical precincts, and epistemological comfort zones to develop a rigorous but innovative approach to the study of the human mind, sociality, spirituality, health, and well being. The Network members represented in this book are Gary Berntson from Ohio State University, Don Browning from the

University of Chicago, John Cacioppo (Network Director) from the University of Chicago, Farr Curlin from the University of Chicago Medical Center, Jean Decety from the University of Chicago, Nick Epley from the University of Chicago Booth School, Clark Gilpin from the University of Chicago, Louise Hawkley from the University of Chicago, Tanya Luhrmann from Stanford University, Chris Masi from the University of Chicago Medical Center, Howard Nusbaum from the University of Chicago, Gün Semin from the University of Utrecht, Steve Small from the University of Chicago Medical Center, Kathryn Tanner from the University of Chicago, and Ron Thisted from the University of Chicago Medical Center. The biography of each along with an explanation for the essay each presents is provided at the beginning of each of their essays on invisible forces.

References

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From Selfish Genes to Social Brains

The Chicago Social Brain Network was established to examine how science might inform us about our fundamental human nature, including the apparently irrepressible quest for connection with a higher understanding and organization. Science can describe what religion does in rigorous ways that benefit religion, and religion can serve a meaning-making function that science itself disclaims. This is not to say that science can address the existence of God. Our Network instead focuses on the consequences of believing in such a mind and of seeing into that mind.

In the next chapter, John Cacioppo, a social neuroscientist, draws on work on evolutionary theory, sociobiology, and evolutionary psychology to examine the implications of the selfish gene hypothesis for *Homo sapiens*. He shows how the notion of the selfish gene has been joined with political theory, consumerism, and economics to produce a dominant modern image of humans summarized by the phrase "what is best for me is best for the society." Without rejecting the selfish gene view, Cacioppo shows how it evolves in humans into what he calls the "social brain"– a large cerebral cortex and an interconnected limbic lobule that together are sensitive to the complexities of physical and social environments. Central to this complexity is the long period of dependency of the human infant and the interdependencies of adult humans for survival especially in hostile environments (e.g., warfare). For the selfish gene to contribute its DNA to the ongoing gene pool, the individual must not only reproduce but also cooperate with others to assure that his or her offspring also grow to maturity and reproduce. This leads to natural selection choosing those genes and capacities that contribute to cooperation, reciprocity, attachments, and generosity. Over the millennia of human evolution, this process has created the social brain and made humans a unique social animal.

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Chapter 2[2]

The Social Nature of Humankind

Social species, by definition, are characterized by the formation of structures (e.g., dyads, families, tribes, cultures) that extend beyond an individual. Although we may revere the rugged individualist, we are fundamentally a social species. I begin by discussing some of the invisible evolutionary forces that led members of our species to band together to form such structures. I then consider how selfish genes (e.g., through anthropomorphism, *1*) might have led to social brains and why the social connections and structures created by humans are especially powerful and flexible. Finally, I describe a nonintuitive way of thinking about the absence of satisfactory social connections (i.e., loneliness), mention how and why chronic loneliness can be so harmful, and discuss how our need for social connection motivates us to search for meaning and connections beyond ourselves and other individuals. One implication that is explored here, and in more detail in the essays to follow, is that genetic and cultural adaptations, not human ignorance, may be fueling the search for meaning and connection with a transcendent entity or being.

Mythic Individualism

For at least the past century, we have celebrated the power and intellectual might of the solitary genius. This includes individuals such as Thomas Edison who brought electrical power to individual households, transforming night into day; Henry Ford who introduced the mass production of automobiles, changing how we transported and consequently how and where we worked and lived; Charles Darwin who argued that the difference in mind between humans and other species, great as it is, is one of degree and not of kind; and Albert Einstein who surmised a relationship between energy and matter, opening a universe of possibilities that previously was virtually unimaginable. As a result, the cultural focus moved from a focus on the social group – the family, neighborhood, or society – toward the autonomous individual.

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[2] The lead author is John T. Cacioppo, Ph.D., the Tiffany and Margaret Blake Distinguished Service Professor in the Departments of Psychology and Psychiatry and the Director of the Center for Cognitive and Social Neuroscience at the University of Chicago. He is a co-founder (with Gary Berntson) of the field of social neuroscience, a past president of the Association for Psychological Science and a recipient of numerous awards including the National Academy of Sciences Troland Research Award and the American Psychological Association Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award. Cacioppo's research concerns the neural, hormonal, genetic, and behavioral mechanisms underlying the operation and maintenance of the emergent structures that characterize social species generally and humans in particular. He has published more than 400 scientific articles and 16 books, including *Loneliness: Human nature and the need for social connection* (2008, Norton Books) and *Handbook of neuroscience for the behavioral sciences* (2009, John Wiley & Sons). Cacioppo is also the Director of the Chicago Social Brain Network.

Cacioppo has been interested both in the similarities and the differences between humans and other species. Human social cognition, emotion, behavior, and executive functioning – that is, our social brain – are especially sophisticated compared to those found in other species. Research in the neurosciences sometimes focuses so much on mechanisms divorced from the social settings and functions they may have evolved to serve in social species such as our own that the generalizations to humans are inaccurate. Animal models permit experimental control and interventions that cannot be carried out in humans, but understanding the implications of this work for the human brain and biology depends on explicit comparison to and knowledge of the rich benefits of human social interaction and feelings of connection. This essay addresses this gap in our thinking about the genetic, neural, and hormonal processes that constitute our brain and body and in doing so provides a different perspective on who we are as a unique biological species.

Forty years ago, the dominant metaphor for the human mind was the digital computer, complete with inputs, filing and memory systems, limited processing resources, and outputs. Evolutionary theory focused on the selfish gene and, by extension, on the individual whose purpose for living was to survive long enough to reproduce. Milton Friedman influenced economic theory and government policies for decades by positing that people, being fundamentally rational, are motivated first and foremost by self interests, and the adage of "united we stand, divided we fall" was supplanted by the notion that what is best for the me is best for the society. Moving from an economy based on manufacturing for the masses to one based on catering to idiosyncratic consumer interests further fueled a focus on the preferences of the autonomous individual.

One can certainly find evidence in humans and other species for the view of life being best understood in terms of self-interest. Sardines, for example, swim in what appears to be synchronized schools until approached by a predator, at which time they dart about so chaotically that they create what appears to be a large, tumultuous ball with a mind of its own. The rule governing the behavior of this dynamic and adaptive collective action can be explained entirely in terms of self-interests. Each fish is driven to swim to the middle, where it is less likely to be eaten by the hungry predator. Sardines are born with the capacity to swim, find food, and avoid predators. If they survive long enough to reproduce, their genes will be part of the gene pool for future generations. That is, if those who are genetically predisposed to swim to the middle are more likely to survive predation, then the genetic predisposition to swim to the middle will become a characteristic of a larger percentage of sardines in future generations.

The sardine ball is an example of a more general phenomenon, in which the choices made by members of a group endow the collective with properties that are consistent, predictable, and purposive enough that we can speak of them as "behaviors" of the group, even though the collective actions of the group are not directed by any of the individual members. This phenomenon can be called "emergent," because the properties or behavior of the group are not determined by any individual but arises from the collective behaviors of the individuals who constitute the group. Social structures like the sardine ball have evolved because the sardines whose genes compelled them to swim to the middle in the presence of predators were more likely to survive to reproduce, thereby contributing these genes to this species' gene pool.

According to the National Science Foundation's Tree of Life project, there are anywhere between 5 million and 100 million species on

Earth, only 2 million of which have been identified thus far. Most of the species identified are either born with the capacity to find sustenance and avoid predation sufficiently well that some survive long enough to reproduce, or they are born in such large numbers that some survive long enough to reproduce. It is the ability of such organisms to reproduce that determines what genes constitute the gene pool for the future generations of that species. These genes, in turn, shape the structure and function of the organisms that constitute a species. This reasoning led George Williams (*2*) to suggest a half century ago that traits (i.e., behavioral tendencies) which benefit the group at the expense of the individual would evolve only if the process of group-selection was great enough to overcome selection within groups. He further suggested that group selection is nearly always weak, so that group-related adaptations do not exist (*3*). Richard Dawkins (*1*) popularized the notion that traits which evolve are adaptive at the gene level through his use of the metaphor of the selfish gene. Genes serve their own selfish interests in the sense that whatever the contributions made by a gene, or set of genes, to an organism's structure and function would be passed on to the next generation if and only if the gene made its way to the gene pool. Survival of the fittest now had a biological basis.

United We Stand, Divided We Fall

Charles Darwin did not know that genes were the mechanism through which structures and behaviors evolved, but an important component of his original theory was the notion of survival of the fittest. Darwin was also puzzled by the observation that many individual organisms made themselves less fit so that the group might survive. Subsequent generations of evolutionary biologists realized that even though genes might act as if selfish, the *vehicle* responsible for the transport of these genes to the gene pool occasionally extended beyond the individual or parent to kin and even to unrelated members of groups. More specifically, in some cases the superorganismal structures formed by social organisms represent naturally selected levels of organization above individual organisms (*4*).

Consider the example of the Emperor penguin (*Aptenodytes forsteri)*. Emperor penguins typically reside near their food source of squid, shoaling fish, and small crustaceans but in early winter they gather into breeding colonies (rookeries) up to 60 miles inland in April and May during the Antarctic winter. They search for their mate from the previous year, and go through a courtship ritual before mating. The female lays only one egg in May or June, which coincides with the start of the bitter Antarctica winter. The Emperor penguins are thought to have developed this unusual winter breeding behavior to permit the chick to grow to independence the following summer, when food is plentiful. Ensuring the chick survives that long is a collective enterprise, with the vehicle responsible for the chick surviving long enough such that it too can reproduce not being solely the mother or the father but also the huddle.

The birthing of the egg leaves the mother depleted, so she must return to the seaside to feed while the father assumes responsibility for the incubation of the egg during the winter. An egg from an Emperor penguin will quickly freeze if left exposed to harsh winter conditions of the Antarctica, so the transition of the egg from beneath the warmth and safety of the mother to atop the feet and under a fold of feathered abdominal skin of the father requires a bit of coordination on the part of the two. Even this is not sufficient for the genes of this pair to find their way into the gene pool. The conditions of the Antarctic winters are among the least hospitable on earth, with winter temperatures dipping below -60 degrees Celsius and winds reaching 120 mph. To protect themselves from the wind and cold, the male penguins huddle together, spending much of their time sleeping to conserve energy. In this harsh environment, survival of the chicks depends on the shared warmth and protection of the huddle, not the individual. The group as a whole is more likely to survive if each penguin and chick shares in the warmth and protection of the collective structure, which means selective pressures exist to promote cooperation to maintain the integrity of the huddle. More generally, for species born to a period of utter dependency, the genes that find their way into the gene pool are not defined solely or even mostly by likelihood that an organism will reproduce but by the likelihood that the offspring of the parent will live long enough to reproduce. As in the case of the Emperor penguins, one consequence is that selfish genes evolved through individual-level selection processes to promote social preferences and group processes, including reciprocal social behaviors, that can extend beyond kin relationships (e.g., *5*). Examples of such selection processes in humans exist, as well (e.g., *6, 7*).

The environmental challenges facing Emperor penguins, as daunting as they are, pale by comparison to the complexities facing the human species. Indeed, the social brain hypothesis posits that the social complexities and demands of primate species contributed to the rapid increase in neocortical (i.e., the outer layer of the brain) connectivity and intelligence (*8*). Warfare among ancestral hunter-gatherers appears to have contributed to group selection for human social behaviors, especially altruistic behaviors (*5*). As Darwin (1871) noted:

> A tribe including many members who, from possessing a high degree of the spirit of patriotism, fidelity, obedience, courage, and sympathy, were always ready to aid one another, and to sacrifice themselves for the common good would be victorious over most other tribes; and this would be natural selection. (p. 166)

Moreover, deducing better ways to find food, avoid perils, and navigate territories has adaptive value for large mammals, but the complexities of these ecological demands are no match for the complexities of social living (especially in hostile between-group social environments), which include: recognizing ingroup and outgroup members; learning by social observation; recognizing the shifting status of friends and foes; anticipating and coordinating efforts between two or more individuals; using language to communicate, reason, teach, and deceive others; orchestrating relationships, ranging from pair bonds and families to friends, bands, and coalitions; navigating complex social hierarchies, social norms and cultural developments; subjugating self-interests to the interests of the pair bond or social group in exchange for the possibility of long term benefits for oneself or one's group; recruiting support to sanction individuals who violate group norms; and doing all this across time frames that stretch from the distant past to multiple possible futures (*9*). Consistent with this hypothesis, measures of sociality in troops of baboons have been found to be highly correlated with infant survival, and cross-species comparisons have shown that the evolution of large and metabolically expensive brains is more closely associated with social than ecological complexity (*9*).

Our survival depends on our connection with others. Born to the most prolonged period of utter dependency of any animal, human infants must instantly engage their parents in protective behavior, and the parents must care enough about their offspring to nurture and protect them. If infants do not elicit nurturance and protection from caregivers, or if caregivers are not motivated to provide such care over an extended period of time, then the infants will perish along with the genetic legacy of the parents (*10*). Our developmental dependency mirrors our evolutionary heritage. Hunter/gatherers did not have the benefit of natural weaponry, armor, strength, flight, stealth, or speed relative to many other species. Human survival depended on *collective* abilities, not on individual might.

Selfish Genes, Social Brains

It is the gene that is obligatorily selfish, not the human brain. Genes that promote behaviors that increase the odds of the genes surviving are perpetuated. One implication of this simple insight is that evolution can be viewed as the competition between genes using individuals and social structures as their temporary vehicles. The genetic constitution of *Homo Sapiens* in the long run derives not solely from the reproductive success of individuals, but also from the success of their children to reproduce. Hunter/gatherers who did not form social connections and who did not feel a compulsion to return to share their food or defense with their offspring may have been more likely to survive to procreate again, but given the long period of dependency of human infants their offspring may have been less likely to survive to procreate. The result is selection that strongly favors the ability to process information that could contribute to the formation and maintenance of social capacities and connections – that is, a social brain. These social capacities evolved hand in hand with genetic, neural, and hormonal mechanisms to support them because the resulting social behaviors helped humans survive, reproduce, and care for offspring sufficiently long that they too survived to reproduce (*11-13*). Relative to other animals, the striking development of and increased connectivity within the human cerebral cortex, especially the frontal and temporal regions, are among the key evolutionary developments in this regard. The cerebral cortex is a mantle of between 2.6 to 16 billion neurons with each neuron receiving 10,000 to 100,000 synapses in their dendritic trees (e.g., *14*). The expansion of the frontal regions in the human brain contributes to the human capacities for reasoning, planning, performing mental simulations, theory of mind, and thinking about self and others. The temporal regions of the brain, in turn, are involved with aspects of social perception, memory, and communication. The means for guiding behavior through the environment emerged prior to neocortical expansion.

The evolutionarily older systems also play a role in human information processing and behavior, albeit in a more rigid and stereotyped fashion. The intricately interconnected neocortical regions of the frontal lobes are involved in self control, which permits the modulation of these older systems and the overriding of organismal hedonistic impulses for the benefit of others (*15*).

Evidence across human history provides overwhelming support for the supposition that humans are fundamentally social creatures (*13*). Even in contemporary times in which autonomy is revered, the average person has been estimated to spend nearly 80% of waking hours in the company of others, most of which is spent in small talk with known individuals (*16*). These estimates have been supported in more detailed assessment using the day-reconstruction method to determine how people spend their time and how they experienced events in their lives on a daily basis (*17*). The results of these daily assessments indicate people spend only 3.4 hrs alone, or approximately 20% of their waking hours. The time spent with friends, relatives, spouse, children, clients, and coworkers is rated on average as more inherently rewarding than the time spent alone (*17*).

Respondents indicate that their most enjoyable activities are intimate relations and socializing – activities that promote bonding and high quality relationships, whereas their least enjoyable activities are commuting and working. These results are consistent with survey data. When asked "what is necessary for happiness?" the majority of respondents rate "relationships with family and friends" as most important (*18*), although we certainly do not always act like this is most important. It is surprisingly easy to overlook the evident.

Noticing the Unusual, Overlooking the Obvious

On January 15, 2009, US Airways Flight 1549 departed from New York's LaGuardia Airport for Charlotte, North Carolina when it struck a flock of geese during takeoff. Both engines were disabled, and the heavy aircraft quickly lost the power it needed to stay aloft, but Capt. Chesley Sullenberger somehow managed a controlled descent into the Hudson River. The media dubbed the ditching of the plane and the survival of all 155 passengers and crew the miracle on the Hudson, and Sullenberger was duly heralded as a hero. The ability to control the descent of an 84-ton plane without engine thrust is not something with which humans are naturally endowed. Sullenberger was not a novice, of course. He is a U.S. Air Force Academy graduate who flew F-4 fighter planes while in the Air Force, has 40 years of flight experience, and holds a commercial glider license and glider instructor rating. As remarkable as was his achievement relative to what one might normally expect in this situation, however, Sullenberger's efforts were not sufficient for the miracle on the Hudson to be achieved.

When Flight 1549 came to a stop in the frigid Hudson River, the passengers and crew scrambled to the wings and inflatable slides of their slowly sinking aircraft. Local commercial vessels from the New York Waterway and Circle Line fleets responded almost immediately, with the first of the vessels reaching the plane within four minutes. The crews of the various vessels worked together to rescue the passengers and crew of Flight

1549, and various volunteers and agencies offered medical assistance. These rescue efforts were not motivated by personal or commercial self-interests, and none of the commercial vessel captains was lauded as a hero. Their efforts received less attention because their actions were precisely what we expect of one another.

It is the unusual, not the commonplace, that is noticed. On March 13, 1964, Kitty Genovese parked near her home in Kew Gardens, New York, and proceeded to her residence in a small apartment complex. Winston Moseley, a business machine operator who later confessed that his motive was simply to kill a woman, overtook Genovese and stabbed her twice in the back. Genovese screamed, "Oh my God, he stabbed me! Help me!", a call that was heard by neighbors. When one neighbor shouted at the attacker, "Leave that girl alone," Moseley ran away. Genovese, who was wounded and bleeding, moved toward the apartment building slowly and alone. Moseley returned approximately 10 minutes later and searched for Genovese. Finding her nearly unconscious in a hallway of the building, he continued his knife attack on her and sexually assaulted her. The entire attack unfolded over about half an hour, and yet no one responded. The first clear call for help to the police did not occur until minutes following the final attack, and Genovese died in an ambulance en route to the hospital. The number of people who were aware of some aspect of the attack was estimated to be from a dozen to more than three dozen. One unidentified neighbor who saw part of the attack was quoted in a *New York Times* article as saying "I didn't want to get involved." (*19*). The notion that people might not go to the aid of another, even a stranger, in dire need led to public outrage. Decades of research led to the conclusion that the ambiguity of the situation and the diffusion of responsibility were contributing factors.

These two news stories illustrate, in very different ways, how invisible forces sculpted by evolution and cultivated by the environment act on our species. When commercial boat captains act against their own financial interests to rescue others on a sinking aircraft, we think nothing of it because we believe it is what any individual in the same situation would naturally do. When observers of a brutal attack do nothing to aid the victim, we are horrified because we believe it goes against who we are as a species. Humans are not motivated solely by self interests but rather we work together and help one another when in need. We survive and prosper in the long term through collective concerns and actions, not by solely selfish pursuits (*20*).

Danger Signals

The stories of the sardine ball and the penguin huddle suggest that it is dangerous to be on the social perimeter. Living on the perimeter threatens the lives and genetic legacy of humans, as well. Epidemiological studies have found that social isolation is not only associated with lower levels of happiness and well being but with broad based morbidity and mortality (*21*). Moreover, humans are such meaning-making creatures that perceived social isolation is at least as important a predictor of adverse outcomes on human health and well being as is objective social isolation (*22*). Writers may spend long periods by themselves, but the envisioned readers make this time feel anything but isolated. High school graduates who leave family and friends for the first time to attend college, on the other hand, typically experience intense feelings of social isolation even though they are physically around more people than before they left home. Caspi and colleagues (*23*) found that *perceived* social isolation in adolescence and young adulthood predicted how many cardiovascular risk factors (e.g., body mass index, waist circumference, blood pressure, cholesterol) were elevated in young adulthood, and that the number of developmental occasions (i.e., childhood, adolescence, young adulthood) at which participants felt socially isolated predicted the number of elevated risk factors in young adulthood.

Perceived social isolation is known more colloquially as loneliness, which in early scientific investigations was depicted as "a chronic distress without redeeming features" (*24, p. 15*). Loneliness may feel like a painfully miserable, hopeless, and worthless state, but we have found it has a specific structure and a valuable adaptive function.

Research on the ways in which people describe themselves when asked the question, "Who are you?", reveals three basic dimensions (*25*): (1) *a personal, or intimate, self,* the "you" of your individual characteristics; (2) a *social or relational self*, which is who you are in relation to the people closest to you—your spouse, kids, friends, and neighbors; and (3) a *collective self,* the you that is the member of a certain ethnic group, has a certain national identity, belongs to certain professional or other associations, and a member of the fan club for certain sports teams. Similar to the relational self, this part of the self is social but what makes this self distinct is that these are broader social identities, linked to larger social groups rather than individual members of the groups. When we examined the dimensions underlying loneliness/social connectedness, we found the same three basic dimensions (*26*): (1) *intimate connection/isolation* refers to the perceived presence/absence of anyone in your life who affirms you as a valued person; (2) *relational connection/isolation* refers to the perceived presence/absence of quality friendships or family connections; and (3) *collective connection/isolation* refers to the perceived presence/absence of a meaningful connection with a group or social stimulus (e.g., school, team) beyond other individuals. When you perceive you are part of a valued group (collective connection), for instance, you may be more inclined to agree with other group members, even on beliefs that may seem irrational, than when you are thinking of yourself as a unique individual.

Given that human survival and prosperity depends on inclusion in and participation with a social group, especially in evolutionary time when food was scarce and dangers were common, there is an adaptive benefit to having the strong and aversive response of loneliness when an individual feels his or her social connections might be weakening or broken, just as there is a benefit to having aversive signals for other conditions critical for survival. Hunger, thirst, and pain have evolved as aversive signals to prompt an organism to change their behavior in a way that protects the individual and promotes the likelihood their genes will make their way into the gene pool. The social pain of loneliness has evolved similarly – to serve as a signal that one's connections to others are weakening and to motivate the repair and maintenance of the connections to others that are needed for our health and well being as for the survival of our genes (*27*). Physical pain is an aversive signal that evolved to motivate one to take action that minimizes damage to one's body. Loneliness is an aversive signal that evolved to motivate one to take action that minimizes damage to one's social body.

People differ dispositionally in their sensitivity to the pain of social disconnection (i.e., feelings of loneliness; *28*) just as people differ in sensitivity to physical pain. Ostracism or objective isolation in most species is associated with an early death (*29*). In humans, the chronic feeling of social isolation, even when the person remains among the protective embrace of others, is associated with significant mental and physical disorders (*30*). Chronic hunger, thirst, and pain can also have deleterious effects for, like loneliness, their adaptive value lies in their effects as acute signals, not as chronic conditions. The opposite of feeling hunger, thirst, pain, or loneliness is feeling *normal*, and this is the state in which most people exist most of the time.

The social connections formed by humans need not be based on genetic similarities. The human species has evolved the capacity for and motivation to form relationships not only with other individuals but also with groups (e.g., a Chicago Cubs or Boston Red Sox fan) and nonhuman entities (e.g., through anthropomorphism, *31*). Team spirit and school spirit are familiar notions, and although team or school spirit refers to an invisible influence, it is an invisible influence that is no less open to rigorous scientific inquiry than are the invisible influences of gravity or magnetic flux. In the cases of team and school spirit, this influence represents a specific form of social connection between an individual and an emergent structure.

Perceived social connections are abstractions that can transcend time and space. People may feel a connection with their ancestors or family heritage even if they are the only remaining descendant, just as people can perceive personal connections with pets, cars, television characters, celebrities, and unseen spiritual entities with whom they do not actually interact. A potent component of spirituality (that does not depend on a specific religion) is the feeling of connection and purpose that come from forming a relationship with a higher being. A simple byproduct of our selfish genes and social brains may be our search for meaning in and connection with broader organizations or beings.

Conclusion

In 1939, the astrophysicist Sir Arthur Eddington published a book entitled *The philosophy of physical science* (*32*). In it he describes a hypothetical scientist who sought to determine the size of the various fish in the sea. The scientist began by weaving a 2-inch mesh net and setting sail across the seas, repeatedly sampling catches and carefully measuring, recording, and analyzing the results of each catch. After extensive sampling, the scientist concluded that there were no fish smaller than two inches in the sea. The moral of Sir Eddington's analogy is twofold. First, scientific instruments are shaped by people's intuitive theories of the phenomena to be investigated. Second, once developed, scientific expectations and instruments shape data and theory in ways more powerfully and fundamentally than are often appreciated.

What is the relevance of this to the story of the social nature of humankind? Our research findings have led me to believe that we all have made Eddington's error in the way we have thought about, studied, and tried to deal with an invisible force that motivates us to seek and maintain our connection with others – including the loneliness one feels when we feel important social connections are threatened or absent. Historically, the scientific perspective on loneliness was not only that it was a painful and miserable state, but that it was an aversive state with no redeeming features. All one needs to do is to reflect on the last time one felt terribly lonely, and one can appreciate the seemingly self-evident truth of this characterization. But as Sir Arthur Eddington's story shows us, the obvious and intuitive can sometimes be very misleading. It is now widely recognized that many structures and processes of the mind operate outside of awareness, with only the end products sometimes reaching awareness.

Humans have evolved to seek connections with and validation from other minds, and these social connections represent an important set of invisible forces operating on our brain and biology. The need for social connection extends beyond kin relations and beyond face to face relations to include felt connections with superorganismal entities such as teams, political parties, nations, and God. The unseen forces compelling these connections can be quantified and investigated objectively independent of one's spiritual beliefs. Underlying these aspirations are selfish genes that have produced a social brain which activates reward regions of the brain when we cooperate effectively with others (*33*) or punish the perpetrators of social exploitations (*34*), and which activates the pain matrix in the brain when we feel rejected by others (*35*). When people feel socially isolated (i.e., lonely) compared to when they do not feel lonely, they are more likely not only to perceive nonhuman objects as human-like but to believe in the existence of God (*31, 36*). To understand the full capacity of and forces operating on humans, we need to appreciate not only the memory and computational power of the brain but its capacity for representing, understanding, and connecting with other individuals and with the emergent structures, fictional and real, that the brain can represent. That is, we need to recognize that we have evolved a powerful, meaning-making *social* brain and a need for social connection.

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From Inclusive Fitness to Spiritual Striving

The notion of "selfish genes" (and, by extension, selfish organisms) was popularized in Richard Dawkins' 1976 book by that title. Not long afterwards, an article appeared in *Science* that presented evidence that the most vicious members of a warlike tribe in South America had the most wives and children. The underlying notion was one of (genetic) survival of the fittest: Those warriors who were particularly vicious were more likely to contribute their genes to the gene pool. Methodological objections have left this an open question, however, and new evidence now exists that calls this interpretation into question (1): the most aggressive warriors may have more children but they have *lower* indices of reproductive success than their milder brethren in part perhaps because the most aggressive warriors and their offspring are also more likely to be the targets of revenge killings. These new data are entirely consistent with John Cacioppo's argument that the content of the human gene pool has more to do with the reproductive success of one's offspring than one's own reproductive success. Cacioppo argued further that this genetic selection resulted in a social brain that seeks meaning and connection with individuals and with social entities (e.g., groups) that extend beyond other individuals.

In the next chapter, theologian Don Browning also embraces the concept of inclusive fitness and, through the writings of Thomas Aquinas, shows how religion serves the human need for meaning and connection through the ethics they advocate, the congregations they form, the institutions they represent, and the God they serve. In his view, religion serves to extend love and connection beyond kin. He further argues that new developments in the sciences and long-standing traditions in theology constitute fertile ground on which to build new and testable hypotheses regarding our fundamental human nature.

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Chapter 3[3]

Science, Religion, and a Revived Religious Humanism

For over 150 years there has been a vital, and often contentious, dialogue between science and religion. In recent years, new energy and fresh public interest have been injected into this conversation. This largely has come about due to the new insights into religion and ethics achieved by collaboration between evolutionary psychology and cognitive and social neuroscience.

What are the likely social consequences of this new interest in the relation of science and religion? There are at least three possible answers. One might be the new atheism exemplified by the writings of Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett, Sam Harris, and Christopher Hitchens.[1] In this approach, the alleged defective thinking of the world religions is exposed, and a worldview and way of life based strictly on science are offered as replacement. A second option might be the return of a hegemonic dominance of religion over science. However, polarizing rhetoric from advocates for the exclusive interpretive priority of either science or religion has long since ceased to be culturally or academically productive. Instead, through dialogue about common issues, scientific and theological thinkers may pose questions that lead to more sophisticated inquiry in both fields. Confidence in the productive possibilities of reciprocal questioning is a hallmark of the long tradition known as religious humanism. Here I illustrate the potential contribution of religious humanism by bringing recent psychological research into dialogue with the religious concept of love.

What would this religious humanism be like? The major world religions would remain visible and viable as religious movements. But the contributions of science would help these religions refine their interests in improving the health, education, wealth, and overall well-being of their adherents. In addition, the sciences would help them refine their grasp of the empirical world about which they are, like humans in general, constantly making judgments, predictions, and characterizations. In my vision, the attitude of scientists toward religion would be first of all phenomenological; they would first attempt to describe and understand religious beliefs, ethics, and rituals in their full historical context. But their interest in explaining some of the conditions that give rise to religious phenomena would not be inhibited by either religion or the wider society. There are several different approaches to phenomenology. The perspective that I recommend follows the "critical hermeneutic phenomenology" of Paul Ricoeur. Ricoeur advocates beginning the study of religion with a phenomenology – a careful description – of the person's or community's words, symbols, metaphors, and narratives used to communicate the meaning of a religious experience or practice. This view assumes that we cannot describe experience directly but rather that experience is always mediated by symbols and metaphors. But Ricoeur's phenomenology does not stop with a description of these meanings. It builds in a secondary place for science and explanation. It seeks through science to give explanatory accounts of the affects and motivations that humans bring to these words, symbols, and metaphors. If scientists followed Ricoeur's model, they would understand the importance of beginning with description, be hesitant to skip lightly over initial phenomenological meanings, appreciate yet grasp the limits of explanation, and be reluctant to plunge into speculations, such as those of the new scientific atheism, about the ultimate truth or falsity of religious phenomena.[2]

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[3] The lead author is Don Browning, Ph.D., the Alexander Campbell Professor of Religious Ethics and the Social Sciences, Emeritus, Divinity School, University of Chicago. He has interests in the relation of the social sciences to religious ethics for the purpose of addressing various challenges facing modern life. His books include Generative Man (1973, 1975; National Book Award Finalist, 1974), Religious Thought and the Modern Psychologies (1987, 2004), the co-authored From Culture Wars to Common Ground: Religion and the American Family Debate (1997, 2000), Christian Ethics and the Moral Psychologies (2006), and Equality and the Family (2007). He co-edited Sex, Marriage, and Family in the World Religions (2006), American Religions and the Family (2006), Children and Childhood in American Religions (2009), and Children and Childhood in World Religions (2009). He is the co-principal investigator with Jean Bethke Elshtain of a Templeton Foundation funded $4,000,000 New Science of Virtue project.

In this essay, Browning acknowledges the antagonistic relationship that can be found between science and religion, but he proposes that the dialogue between science and religion can now be conducted on philosophical grounds that promote a new religious humanism that will honor the core ideas of the great religions, refine their view of nature, and increase the values of health, wealth, education, and general well-being.

On the other hand, the religions themselves can contribute to the sciences. They can do this by offering hypotheses about how social and religious ideas, behaviors, and rituals can shape experience, even neural processes, often for the good but sometimes not. The religions can offer a more generous epistemology and ontology than science is inclined to find useful for the tight explanatory interests of the laboratory or scientific survey. This too might generate new hypotheses for scientific investigation. These would be some of the ground rules for how a dialogue between science and religion might stimulate a revived religious humanism.

Religious Humanisms of the Past

To speak of a revival suggests that there have been many expressions of religious humanism in the past when some form of science, philosophy, and religion creatively interacted. I will limit myself to speaking primarily about Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. A synthesis between Greek philosophical psychology and Christianity can be found in the use of Stoic theories of desire by the apostle Paul,[3] the presence of Aristotle's family ethic – with its implicit psycho-biology - in the household codes of Ephesians and I Colossians,[4] and the gospel of John's identification of Jesus with the Platonic and Stoic idea of the pre-existent "Word."[5] A more intentional religious humanism can be found in Augustine's use of the neo-Platonic Plotinus, especially in the philosophical psychology of remembrance developed in his *Confessions*.[6] But the most dramatic example of a religious humanism that spread simultaneously into Judaism, Christianity, and Islam can be found when the lost texts of Aristotle were discovered, translated, and appropriated by scholars from these three religions who worked at the same tables in Islamic libraries in Spain and Sicily during the ninth and tenth centuries. Richard Rubinstein in his timely book titled *Aristotle's Children* (2003) tells the story well.[7] This gave rise to forms of Aristotelian religious humanism in the works of Thomas Aquinas in Christianity, Maimonides in Judaism, and Averroës in Islam. On the American scene, one sees another form of Christian humanism in the synthesis of philosophical pragmatism, with all its influence from Darwin, and expressions of liberal Christianity and the social gospel movement.[8]

Religious humanisms have not always flourished and are subject to attacks from both fundamentalists and scientific secularists. They need constant updating and vigorous intellectual development. But at their best, they make it possible for societies to maintain strong religious communities as well as integrating symbolic umbrellas that protect the productive interaction of the scientific disciplines with the wider cultural and religious life.

An Example: The *Agape, Caritas, and Eros* Debate

Few words in the English language have such a range of everyday meanings and of serious philosophical and theological consideration as the word love. For this reason, it is an excellent candidate for scientific investigation that has potential benefits for religious practice and everyday life. Although some theologians have sought to create a sharp division between "Christian love" and all other forms of love, the tradition of religious humanism proposes that science clarifies the workings of love in human societies and religion extends the scope of love beyond its most immediate domain of kinship.

There are three major tensions in theological discussions of Christian love. They center around the two Greek words *agape and eros* and the Latin word *caritas*. A famous book titled *Agape and Eros* (1953) written by the Swedish theologian Anders Nygren traced the debate through Christian history.[9] Nygren believed that the truly normative and authentic understanding of Christian love is found in the word *agape,* the Greek word used for Christian love in the New Testament. It refers to a kind of self-giving, even self-sacrificial, love that is only possible by the grace of God.[10] Nygren was particularly interested in arguing that Christian love did not build on what the Greek philosophers called *eros*. He claimed *eros* refers to the natural desires of humans to have and unite with the goods of life. This includes the goods of health, wealth, affiliation, and pleasure but it also includes the higher goods of beauty and truth. Nygren's point, however, was that Christian *love does not build on or incorporate eros* – the natural aspirational strivings of humans. He believed he found this view of Christian love in the New Testament (especially the writing of the apostle Paul) and Martin Luther, the giant of the Protestant Reformation.

Nygren was particularly interested in dismantling the classical medieval Roman Catholic view of Christian love that was often summarized with the English word charity or the Latin word *caritas*. Why did Nygren oppose the *caritas* view of Christian love? The answer is that the meaning of love as *caritas* did exactly what Nygren thought Paul and Luther, his theological heroes, did not do. In the classic Roman Catholic view, love as *caritas* builds on *eros*. *Caritas* was seen to include natural desires for health and affiliation. But the *caritas* view of love also held that religious education and God's grace built on and expanded these natural inclinations to entail a self-giving benevolence to others, even strangers and enemies – an idea so central to the concept of Christian love.

All of this seemed too naturalistic for Nygren. It seemed to play down the importance of God's transforming grace. He joined other European neo-orthodox theologians of his day such as Karl Barth and Rudolph Bultmann in cutting off Christian love from *eros*,[11] which in effect was to cut Christian love from nature and desire – the very things scientists tend to study. Beginning with Nygren's strong view of *agape* and the strong supernaturalism of both Nygren and Barth, there was little room in these mid-twentieth century Protestant trends for a productive dialogue between Christian ethics and the new scientific advances in moral psychology, evolutionary psychology, and neuroscience.

At the same time, however, breakthroughs in these very disciplines have led to a new reassessment of the Catholic *caritas* model of Christian love. But before I review in more detail how this model worked, especially in the thought of the great medieval Roman Catholic theologian Thomas Aquinas, let me turn to review some of the moral implications of insights into kin altruism and inclusive fitness emerging today from evolutionary psychology and social neuroscience.

Moral Implications of Kin Altruism and Inclusive Fitness

As is well known, the idea of inclusive fitness was first put forth in 1964 by William Hamilton.[12] Hamilton's view of inclusive fitness holds that living beings not only struggle for their individual survival but for the survival of offspring and kin who also carry their genes. Their altruism is likely to be proportional to the percentage of their genes that others carry. This insight was further developed by the concept of parental investment. Ronald Fisher and Robert Trivers (1972) defined it as "any investment by the parent in an individual offspring that increases the offspring's chance of surviving…at the cost of the parent's ability to invest in other offspring."[13] These insights were at the core of the emerging field of sociobiology and were first brought to the wider public attention by E.O. Wilson's *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis* (1975).[14]

But the moral implications of the concept of inclusive fitness, parental investment, and kin altruism have received competing interpretations. Richard Dawkins in his *The Selfish Gene* (1976) turned these ideas into a defense of philosophical ethical egoism and argued that all altruistic acts are disguised maneuvers to perpetuate our own genes.[15] But there are other interpretations. Social neuroscientist John Cacioppo interprets our motives toward inclusive fitness and kin altruism as the core of human intergenerational care and the vital link between sociality and spirituality. In cooperation with his colleagues, his research on loneliness uses evolutionary theory on inclusive fitness to order many of his findings. From the perspective of this model of basic human motivations, loneliness can be seen as a condition that "promotes inclusive fitness by signaling ruptures in social connections and motivates the repair or replacement of these connections."[16] According to his interpretation of inclusive fitness, our gene continuity is not assured by simply having our own children. Our children also must have children as well. And this is a challenge entailing long-term expenditures of energy. To account for this, Cacioppo writes something about human infant dependency that is very close to what both the Greek philosopher Aristotle and the medieval Roman Catholic theologian Thomas Aquinas set down many centuries earlier. Cacioppo says,

> For many species, the offspring need little or no parenting to survive and reproduce. Homo sapiens, however, are born to the longest period of abject dependency of any species. Simple reproduction, therefore, is not sufficient to ensure that one's genes make it into the gene pool. For an individual's genes to make it to the gene pool, one's offspring must survive to reproduce. Moreover, social connections and the behaviors they engender (e.g., cooperation, altruism, alliances) enhance the survival and reproduction of those involved, increasing inclusive fitness.[17]

According to this view, the twofold interaction between inclusive fitness and the long period of infant dependency has shaped humans over the long course of evolution into the social and caring creatures we are. Sociality is a fundamental characteristic of humans, and, according to Cacioppo, spirituality, in its various forms, is an extension of sociality. Religion is generally, although not always, good for our mental and physical health - our heart, our blood pressure, our self-esteem, and our self-control - just like having good friends and family or not being lonely are also good for our well-being.[18] Cacioppo and colleagues do not equate sociality and religion; they are fully aware that religions are complex phenomena with many different doctrinal, ethical, ritual, organizational, personal, and social features that require either rigorous experimental or clinical population studies to sort out, even from the perspective of how they affect health. Nonetheless, he seems to hold that the sociality that most religions offer is a key reason for their efficacy in human well-being.

Does Christian Love Build on Health?

But my concern is the topic of Christian love and not simply Christianity's contribution to mental and physical health. Although Jesus is said to have performed miracles of health, offering health in this world has never been at the core of Christianity or, for that matter, the other Abrahamic religions of Judaism and Islam. Bringing to maturity loving and self-giving persons has been the primary concern of Christianity, whether or not this contributes to health and well-being. But the question is, as I elaborated above, does Christian love build on *eros* - that is, our strivings for health and other goods - or come exclusively from some trans-natural source as Nygren believes the normative tradition taught? And did Christianity ever identify *eros* and our deepest motivations with something like inclusive fitness and kin altruism?

Let me start with Aquinas. In the "Supplement" to his *Summa Theologica III,*

Thomas follows Aristotle and the Roman natural-law theorist Ulpian in asserting that humans share with all animals an inclination to have offspring.[19] Having said this, he then introduces a very modern sounding commentary on the uniqueness to humans of the long period of infant dependency. Notice the similarity of his argument to the words of Cacioppo above. Aquinas writes,

> Yet nature does not incline thereto in the same way in all animals; since there are animals whose offspring are able to seek food immediately after birth, or are sufficiently fed by their mother; and in these there is no tie between male and female; whereas in those whose offspring needing the support of both parents, although for a short time, there is a certain tie, as may be seen in certain birds. In man, however, since the child needs the parents' care for a long time, there is a very great tie between male and female, to which tie even the generic nature inclines.[20]

Although there is in this quote a description of how family formation emerges at the human level, there is an implicit argument for both the fact of human infant dependency and what we today call inclusive fitness as well. But these ideas are even more evident in the next quote, although stated very much from the male point of view, a habit typical of his time. Aquinas says, "Since the natural life which cannot be preserved in the person of an undying father is preserved, by a kind of succession, in the person of the son, it is naturally befitting that the son succeed in the things belonging to the father."[21] Aquinas's main source for this insight was Aristotle's *Politics.* In one place Aristotle wrote, " In common with other animals and with plants, mankind have a natural desire to leave behind them an image of themselves."[22]

However, in both Aristotle and Aquinas, such claims were not just about the importance of kin continuity, they were statements about the origin and need of long-term investments by parents at the human level. In contrast to his teacher Plato who, in his *Republic,* had advocated removing children from their biological parents in an effort to overcome the civil frictions created by nepotism,[23] Aristotle counters with an assertion about the origins of human care. Aristotle wrote, "That which is common to the greatest number has the least care bestowed upon it." He believed that in Plato's state, "love will be watery….Of the two qualities which chiefly inspire regard and affection – that a thing is your own and that it is your only one – neither can exist in such a state as this."[24] This is an assertion about the importance of kin altruism in human care.

Although Aquinas saw these natural inclinations as important for the formation of long-term human care, he believed that they were not sufficient for mature parental love. Powerful social, cultural, and indeed religious reinforcements were also necessary for stable parental investment to be realized. This, once again, is due, according to Aquinas, because of the many long years of human childhood dependency; human children need their parents for a very long period of time and over the course of many contingencies and challenges. This leads Aquinas to develop his theology of marriage as a way of consolidating and stabilizing parental commitment, especially paternal commitment, to their dependent children. [25]

Although neither Aristotle nor Aquinas presented the full intergenerational scope of Cacioppo's interpretation of kin altruism and inclusive fitness – that it must extend to our children's children and not just our own – both perspectives comprehended the interlocking nature of kin altruism and the well-spring of care, long-term human commitment, and hence some of the rudimentary energies of human morality.

Of course, Aquinas and those who followed him supplemented these naturalistic observations with additional epistemological presuppositions that may seem strange to scientists. These included the idea that God works through nature as well as grace, hence God is present in the kin altruistic inclinations of parents and grandparents. He also assumed that in order for kin altruism to be stable, the additional social reinforcements of institutional marriage and God's strengthening grace and forgiveness were also needed. In addition, he held - and Christianity has always taught - that Christian love includes more than kin altruism and the care of our familial offspring; it must include the love of neighbor, stranger, and enemy, even to the point of self-sacrifice. For the Christian, this was made possible by the idea that God was the creator of all humans and hence each person was a child of God and made in God's image (*imago dei)*. For this reason, as Kant would say on different grounds, each individual should be treated "always as an end and never as a means only." [26] In Aquinas's view, acting on this belief, and with the empowering grace of God, made it possible for Christians *to build on yet analogically generalize their kin altruism to all children of God, even those beyond the immediate family, their own children, and their own kin.* These wider assumptions may be beyond the competence of science to assess. They entail a step toward metaphysical speculation of the kind science would do better to avoid. Nonetheless, in the view of Christian love developed in Aquinas, the seeds of a religious humanism – in this case a Christian humanism –began to form.

I have tried to illustrate how insights from Aristotle and Aquinas can join with insights from evolutionary psychology and social neuroscience to refine the Christian understanding of love. In pursuing this course, I join the work of Stephen Pope and others in presenting this option. [27] The kind of Christian humanism found in Aquinas makes it possible for Christianity to be enriched by the modern sciences of human nature. Aquinas's view is strikingly different from Nygren's representation of Paul and Luther when Nygren contends that Christian *love does not build on our own natural energies*, *but "has come to us from heaven*." [28] Or again, it is very different from Nygren's view when he writes that the Christian is "merely the tube, the channel through which God's love flows." [29] The complete discontinuity in this statement between the downward love of God and the natural extension to nonkin of human kin-altruistic impulses is stunning. And such a view as Nygren's precludes the possibility of a religious humanism of the kind I have been describing. And it eliminates the possibility of the refinements to religious views of human nature that the conversation between religion and science can offer.

Conclusion

My argument has been that a revived religious humanism can come about through the dialogue between religion and science, particularly between religion and the psychological sciences. I have illustrated this with the issue of love in Christianity. I believe my argument could be illustrated with other religions, especially the Abrahamic religions of Judaism and Islam. As Aristotle's influence created a kind of religious humanism in these religions in the past, the broader dialogue between science and religion may be able to do this for them in the future.

But the contributions will not simply flow from science to religion. Even in this short essay, a question for science to investigate has arisen. It is this: how do religious and metaphysical beliefs extend the impulse of natural kin altruism, if at all? This goes beyond the issue of the relation of religion to health. It raises the question of the relation of religion to expansive love for the distant other. This is a good question that comes from taking the claims of religion seriously and an example of how religion can continue to feed and challenge scientific inquiry.

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The Status of the Body Politic and the Status of the Body Itself

In the long history of conversations between science and religion, starting points matter. As Don Browning demonstrates through the example of Thomas Aquinas, when religions start with a desire to understand human behavior, such as the long-term human commitment between parent and child, they recognize that science might illuminate and refine that understanding. And religion, in turn, might shape social institutions that not only enhance the human drive toward social connection but also imaginatively extend its influence beyond direct kinship to influence ethical relations with neighbor and stranger. By starting with a shared interest in understanding what Browning calls "the rudimentary energies of human morality," creative conversation between science and religion thus prompts a religious humanism, in which religion partners with science to shape models of fulfillment for human sociality.

Like Browning, Louise Hawkley starts with the human quest for social connection. As humans mature, Hawkley observes, they proceed from childhood dependence not toward independence but toward interdependence. But, whereas Browning pursued the implications of interdependence for the body politic, Hawkley wants to know the consequences of interdependence for the physical body. Her research focuses on the interplay between psychological and physical factors in the human sense of social connectedness, and Hawkley finds that "feeling wanted and accepted and like one belongs are as vital to our existence as the air we breathe. " A robust sense of social connection reverberates throughout the human body, and its absence—in loneliness—is likely to have long-term adverse effects on personal health.

Chapter 4[4]
Health by Connection:
From Social Brains to Resilient Bodies

We enter and leave the world alone, but at no time do we exist disconnected from others. The connection with the mother that begins *in utero* does not end with the physical severing of the umbilical cord but continues in a lengthy dependence on the mother or primary caregiver(s) for food and safety. Years are needed for the infant to reach physical and reproductive maturation, but as Cacioppo notes, even more importantly these years are needed for the infant to develop the social and emotional skills necessary for survival in a complex social world. We graduate from infantile dependence not to independence but to interdependence (cooperation, trust, reciprocity, etc.). That we are born to and for connection explains why feeling disconnected, isolated, and like we don't belong can be so painful. We call these feelings loneliness. Feelings of loneliness function like physical pain or hunger or thirst; they motivate us to alleviate the social pain and to repair our sense of connectedness. This is an important adaptive function of loneliness because people who feel connected fare much better than those who feel disconnected. They are not only happier but also healthier than their more lonely counterparts. As we will see, the power of felt connectedness reverberates throughout the human body. As was aptly stated by Frederick Buechner, "You can kiss your family and friends good-bye and put miles between you, but at the same time you carry them with you in your heart, your mind, your stomach, because you do not just live in a world but a world lives in you."[1] We tend to take for granted our sense of social connectedness, but that should not blind us to its powerful, albeit invisible, influence on our lives. Its impact is best exposed when we observe the effects of its absence (i.e., loneliness) on physical and mental health and well-being.

Loneliness is a Health Risk, but How?

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[4] The lead author is Louise C. Hawkley, Ph.D., a Senior Research Scientist (Assistant Professor), member of the Center for Cognitive and Social Neuroscience, and Associate Director of the Social Neuroscience Laboratory at the University of Chicago. Her research is concerned with the interplay of psychological and physiological factors, and includes the study of autonomic, neuroendocrine, immune, genetic, and behavioral processes that contribute to physical and mental health and well-being in individuals differing in perceived social connectedness. She has published numerous articles and chapters on perceived social isolation (loneliness) and its antecedents and consequences in young and aging adults.

Hawkley finds awe in the significance of what it means to be a social species. Atul Gawande wrote, "We are social not just in the trivial sense that we like company, and not just in the obvious sense that we each depend on others. We are social in a more elemental way: simply to exist as a normal human being requires interaction with other people" (The New Yorker, March 2009). Hawkley believes that we are social beings to our cellular core, and even that does not capture the full extent of our sociality. For these reasons, she is increasingly uncomfortable with the term "loneliness," a term that is laden with popular definitions and understandings that only hint at the deeper significance of our social nature. As she shows, what the study of loneliness actually reveals is that feeling wanted and accepted and like one belongs are as vital to our existence as the air we breathe. Nothing kills like being denied a socially meaningful existence.

For research purposes, loneliness is typically measured on a continuum that ranges from not at all lonely (i.e., socially connected) to very lonely. It is informative, however, to get a sense of the prevalence of loneliness when assessed as present or absent. Loneliness is a common experience; as many as 80 percent of people under 18 years of age and 30 percent of people over 65 years of age report being lonely at least sometimes. For most people, feelings of loneliness are situational and transient (e.g., geographic relocation). For as many as 15-30% of the general population, however, loneliness is a chronic state, and it is among these individuals that loneliness wreaks its greatest havoc. In a study of children followed through young adulthood, those who were highly lonely at each of three measurement occasions (i.e., childhood, adolescence, and at 26 years of age) exhibited a significantly greater number of standard health risks. The chronically lonely individuals were more likely to have higher body mass index (BMI), elevated blood pressure, higher levels of total cholesterol, lower levels of "good" HDL cholesterol, greater concentrations of glycosylated hemoglobin (an index of impaired glucose metabolism), and poorer respiratory fitness than those who were lonely at only two or one of the measurement occasions.[2] In a study of older adults, loneliness predicted mortality over a 3-year period, and increased mortality was explained by the fact that lonely individuals had more chronic diseases and functional limitations.[3] Higher rates of mortality in lonely individuals do not appear to be attributable to inadequate healthcare utilization: even after accounting for the presence and severity of chronic illness, lonely individuals are actually more likely than nonlonely individuals to make use of health facilities and physicians.[4]

Most chronic diseases (e.g., hypertension, coronary artery disease, diabetes) are the result of the interactive influences of genetic, environmental, and behavioral factors on physiological functioning. How do feelings of loneliness penetrate to a level that affects disease risk? Plausible pathways include poor health behaviors, stress-related processes, restorative "anti-stress" processes, and even differences in patterns of gene activity. In general, physiological systems exhibit redundancies and compensatory processes that minimize the immediate health effects of adverse heritable, environmental, and behavioral factors. However, subtle changes in these predisease pathways can be detected prior to the onset of manifest disease and may indicate the beginnings of a steeper downward trajectory in resilience.[5]

Take health behaviors, for instance. Major risk factors for disease in Western society include high-calorie, high-fat diets, and sedentary lifestyles, each of which contribute to being overweight or obese. Feelings of loneliness have been associated with greater incidence of these predominantly lifestyle risk factors. In a large cross-sectional survey of adults 18 years and older, the lonely group had a higher mean BMI and a greater proportion of overweight/obese individuals than did the nonlonely group. Loneliness has been associated with lower levels of physical activity in every age group from grade school to middle-age adults. In the latter study, lonely individuals were also more likely to become inactive over time. Changes in health status also predicted an increased likelihood of becoming inactive, but the effects of loneliness were independent of changes in health status. Similarly, individuals with fewer social connections (i.e., a smaller social network) were less likely to be physically active, but the effects of loneliness on physical activity did not depend on the size of the social network. The invisible force of loneliness seems to play a unique role in this particular predisease pathway.

Another commonly cited risk factor for disease is stress. In reality, "stress" refers to a family of predisease pathways, each of which may be vulnerable to the influence of lonely feelings. Loneliness is itself a source of stress, but lonely individuals also differ in their exposure to stressful events and circumstances. This is less evident in young adults than it is in older adults in whom loneliness was associated with having experienced a greater number of stressful life events in the past year (e.g., death in the family, marital crisis, change in employment status) and more sources of chronic stress (e.g., employment stress, marital stress).[6] In addition, lonely individuals perceive life as more stressful and less gratifying than their socially connected counterparts, even when objective indications are that lonely and nonlonely individuals do not differ in the types of activities and behaviors they engage in on a daily basis. Good quality social interactions typically ameliorate feelings of stress, but because lonely people perceive their interactions to be less positive than those of nonlonely people, they fail to derive the same benefit. Good coping strategies can also ameliorate feelings of stress, but lonely individuals are more likely to respond to stress with pessimism and avoidance than with optimism and active engagement. And to add insult to injury, loneliness increases sensitivity to and surveillance for social threats. Anxiety, low self-esteem, and fear of negative evaluation elicit self-defensive behaviors and effectively tax cognitive resources that would normally be available to meet the demands of daily life stress. Thus, what might naively be thought of as a circumscribed problem—the feeling of loneliness and isolation—may be seen by the sufferer as a world of inescapable threat.[7]

How might these cognitions and perceptions influence physiology and health? As Berntson shows in his chapter, the brain regions involved in emotional and perceptual processes are intimately related to brain regions involved in the regulation of physiological systems. This is particularly evident in alterations of the functioning of the cardiovascular system in lonely individuals. In young adults, this alteration is apparent in increased resistance to blood flow in small arteries throughout the body. Increased vascular resistance is a precursor and predominant contributor to age-related increases in systolic blood pressure (SBP), a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease. In middle-aged adults, SBP is significantly higher in lonely adults than in their nonlonely counterparts. Moreover, loneliness accelerates the rate of increases in SBP,[8] indicating a faster decline in physiological resilience and a heightened risk for chronic cardiovascular disease. It's as though loneliness accelerates the aging process.

By virtue of extensive interconnections among the brain, peripheral nervous systems, and endocrine glands, the feelings of isolation and loneliness have a broad and deep reach. The hypothalamus plays a key role in enabling communication from brain to periphery. Located in the lower central region of the brain, the hypothalamus receives neural input on brain and body states (e.g., pain, sadness, fear, hunger) and in response signals brain regions that control the autonomic nervous system and the pituitary and adrenal glands. Signals to the autonomic nervous system permit modulation of heart rate, blood pressure, and numerous other factors that serve to maintain homeostasis. Signals to the pituitary gland (located at the base of the brain, just below the hypothalamus) prompt the release of hormones that ultimately permit modulation of almost every endocrine gland in the body, including the adrenal glands (one is situated on top of each kidney). The adrenal glands serve many functions, and one is to produce and secrete cortisol. Cortisol is frequently referred to as a "stress hormone" because circulating levels increase dramatically in response to any stimulus that requires, or might require, metabolic resources. Thus, cortisol increases blood sugar levels, increases blood pressure, and reduces immune responses and inflammation (hence the use of cortisone cream or injections to control inflammation of the skin after exposure to poison ivy). This complex web of physiological links may seem far removed from feelings of social isolation, but loneliness has repeatedly been observed to be a risk factor for elevated levels of cortisol, especially in the morning. For instance, in middle-aged adults, the more intense the degree of loneliness reported at day's end over the course of three days in everyday life, the higher the spike in cortisol the subsequent morning. The conundrum is that loneliness is associated with increased risk of chronic conditions that are characterized by heightened inflammation (e.g., atherosclerosis, elevated cholesterol levels, heart disease, diabetes, and even cognitive impairment). If cortisol dampens inflammation, why might elevated levels of cortisol in lonely individuals be associated with more rather than less inflammation?

It turns out that communication among the hypothalamus, pituitary gland, and adrenal glands becomes dysregulated when chronically stimulated. Whereas cortisol effectively dampens immune and inflammatory responses on an acute basis, when circulating cortisol levels are chronically elevated, cells become resistant to its immunosuppressant and anti-inflammatory effects. This alteration happens at the level of DNA where the actions of genes in each cell of our body can be turned on (i.e., expressed) or off. Recent evidence suggests that the effects of loneliness reach down to this level. Circulating leukocytes (white blood cells) from a small group of chronically lonely adults showed decreased expression of glucocorticoid response genes relative to expression rates in a matched group of socially connected adults. These genes are important because they activate the production of proteins that "hear" the anti-inflammatory signal sent by cortisol. Thus, despite higher levels of circulating cortisol in the lonely group, the cortisol signal may still not be heard. The lonely group also showed increased expression of genes carrying pro-inflammatory elements which, together with reduced expression of glucocorticoid response genes, provides a functional genomic explanation for elevated risk of inflammatory disease in individuals who experience chronically high levels of loneliness.[9]

The effects of loneliness are not limited to an increase in health-threatening processes. Loneliness has also been associated with a decrease in health-restoring processes. Sleep is the quintessential example. Much of what feels stressful and depressing at the end of a long day is perceived differently following a good night's sleep. Good quality sleep is the clincher. Lonely and non-lonely individuals do not differ in the amount of sleep they get, but lonely people have poorer sleep quality than do non-lonely people. They experience more micro-awakenings during the night and they awake feeling more tired and less capable of meeting the demands of the day. Poor sleep has been associated with elevated blood pressure and cardiovascular mortality, and this may help to explain the poorer health outcomes of chronically lonely individuals. In short, lonely days extend into the nights and lessen the restorative nature of sleep.

Loneliness and Health: It's Not Just Peripheral

From this sampling of the widespread effects of loneliness on health, lifestyle behaviors, physiological functioning, genetic transcription, and sleep quality, it should be clear that the invisible power of felt isolation has long tentacles that have the potential to influence all of physiology. Not only physical health, but also cognitive health is compromised. Indeed, one of the most sobering findings of recent years is that loneliness places people at risk for impaired cognition and dementia.[10] In a 4-year prospective study of initially dementia-free older adults, the risk of Alzheimer's Disease was more than twice as great in lonely than in nonlonely individuals. In addition, loneliness was associated with lower cognitive ability at baseline and with a more rapid decline in cognition during the 4-year follow-up. Similar results were reported for a sample of 75-85-year-old individuals over a 10-year follow-up.

The effects of loneliness on cognition are evident at an even more fundamental level.[11] Self-regulation, or the ability to regulate one's attention, cognition, emotion, and/or behavior to better meet social standards or personal goals, is impaired in lonely individuals. For instance, among young adults, instructions to shift auditory attention from the dominant right ear to the non-dominant left ear resulted in impaired performance in lonely relative to nonlonely individuals. Loneliness also alters emotion regulation. In middle-aged and older adults, loneliness was associated with a diminished tendency to capitalize on positive emotions, and this explained why lonely individuals were less likely than nonlonely individuals to engage in physical activity. Impaired cognitive regulation is evident in experimental studies that manipulate feelings of isolation. Participants who receive feedback that induces a sense that they are doomed to a future of social isolation perform significantly worse on tests of reasoning, behave more aggressively, and choose more tasty but unhealthy foods than other participants who receive feedback indicating a future of social connection or bad feedback of a non-social nature, namely that their future will consist of general misfortune.[12] There seems to be something uniquely threatening about the prospect, and the reality, of feeling isolated, disconnected, and like one doesn't belong.

In terms of emotional health, the prospect for lonely people is increasing misery, at least over the short term. Loneliness and depressed affect tend to be thought of as synonymous, but the two are conceptually and empirically distinct. If loneliness and depression were synonymous, increases in loneliness would have no capacity to predict increases in depressive symptoms because increases in one would be exactly paralleled by increases in the other. Instead, longitudinal data have shown that loneliness predicts an increase in depressive symptoms but depressive symptoms do not predict an increase in loneliness over a one-year interval.[13] Importantly, the influence of loneliness on depressive symptoms was not attributable to fewer social connections, general negativity, stress, or poor social support. These data suggest that the relevant intervention target is loneliness, and that modifying the cognitions, perceptions, and expectations of the lonely individual could help improve quality of life and overall well-being.

Social Connectedness: Invisible Forces Made Visible

At this juncture, having become acquainted with the burden of loneliness, it is helpful to remember that most people, most of the time, feel socially connected. They derive satisfaction and meaning from their social relationships, and this makes them happier and more satisfied with life. Interestingly, happiness leads to higher levels of relationship satisfaction, indicating that happiness and relationship satisfaction feed forward to foster spirals of increasing happiness and relationship satisfaction. The general positivity that ensues from happiness is also apparent in the effects of happiness on income. Happiness predicted increases in household income over a 2-year period in middle-aged adults. However, relationship satisfaction also predicted increases in household income over this time period and, remarkably, relationship satisfaction helped to explain the effect of happiness on income. It seems that happy people experience increases in income in part because of the general good will that surrounds the socially contented individual and that elicits tangible and intangible positivity from others.

It is perhaps precisely because most people feel socially connected and happy that we take for granted the invisible force of social connectedness and its stabilizing and nurturing influence in all aspects of life. Only in its absence do we begin to comprehend its power. Western notions of the autonomous individual notwithstanding, human beings are "wired" for social connections and need social bonds to feel safe, valued, motivated, and competent.[14] Among the lamentations expressed by some in Western societies is a concern that our autonomy and independence come at the expense of meaningful social relationships and a sense of belonging to a larger social unit. Family members are no longer obligatorily part of our social community, while Facebook friends, some of whom we know only through electronic media, are deemed essential to fulfilling our need for a sense of connectedness and belonging.[15] The broadening of our social worlds has not been accompanied by maintenance, much less improvement, of the quality of our social relationships. One national study showed a threefold increase between 1985 and 2004 in the number of Americans who reported no one with whom to discuss important matters.[16] We are a meaning-making species, and relationships that offer security, comfort, trust, and pleasure, even if interactions are relatively infrequent, are much more effective at fostering a sense of connectedness and belonging than are more friends or more frequent interactions that fail to meet these standards. The challenge, especially for those of us who live in Western society, is to recognize that the invisible force of social connectedness has benefits for health and well-being that we ignore at our peril.

Conclusion

The research on loneliness highlights the need for and benefits of human connections, but it speaks even more directly to the role of beliefs about our connections. Loneliness, after all, is not about how many social relationships a person has, but is about a belief that the existing social relationships fail to satisfy a desired sense of social connectedness. All human relationships have a tangible existence in physical interactions and an invisible existence in mental representations and beliefs. This human capacity expands the range of possible relationships. For instance, humans form meaningful connections with pets, with television characters whom they have never met, and with deities who lack a material existence. We have seen the health impact of the invisible force of loneliness; do different kinds of invisible forces have different effects?

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From Relationships to People and Groups to Relationships with God

The extent and quality of our social connections can have profound consequences for our physical well-being. In her essay, Louise Hawkley explores in particular the consequences that feelings of inadequate social connection have on such physical outcomes as sleep quality, high blood pressure, reduced ability to respond to inflammation, cognitive health in aging, and cardiovascular health. While Hawkley emphasizes the relationship between the invisible forces of social connection and health and the biological mechanisms responsible for this relationship, Gary Berntson takes things one step further by exploring a person's perceived connection with God and its effects on our basic biological systems. Many of our basic biological processes, such as breathing or maintaining sufficient blood pressure to oxygenate the brain, are reflexes that are so automatic that they become invisible to us. Berntson shows that thoughts and beliefs alter not only behaviors, but also the regulation of these reflex-like mechanisms. And he suggests that the root of these effects may lie in the way that humans and other animals maintain biological equilibrium with regulatory mechanisms that, under ordinary circumstances, keep each other in check. This theory describes a biological mechanism that could explain why spirituality is associated with generally better health.

autonomic
control
heart
sympathetic
parasympathetic
nervous
system
spirituality
social
Cardiac
health
reciprocal
attack
Regulation
activation
blood
branches
pressure
beliefs
higher
impact
associated
relationship
psychological
servants
effects
factors
relations
God
stress
HSV

Chapter 5[5]

Psychosomatic Relations: From Superstition to Mortality

People have many sources of information, knowledge and understanding. We consider the most common of these to be empirically acquired, learned facts, relations, associations, and perceptual and motor skills. Such learned associations serve as powerful determinants of thought and behavior. But other sources of information and knowledge also affect our interaction with the environment, including reflex-like (constitutionally endowed) circuits that are independent of explicit learning. Examples include central networks for pain withdrawal, hunger circuits for the ingestion of essential nutrients, social affiliation networks, and neural systems that promote maternal bonding. Each of these sources of information or knowledge can impact thoughts and beliefs, and thoughts and beliefs can impact behaviors and other bodily functions.

> "…a Maori woman who, having eaten some fruit, was told that it had been taken
>
> from a tabooed place; she exclaimed that the sanctity of the chief had been profaned
>
> and that his spirit would kill her … the next day … she was dead."(1)

> "I have seen a strong young man die …. the same day he was tapued
>
> (tabooed); the victims die under it as though their strength ran out as water. . ."(1)

A superstition is a belief, based not on reason or knowledge, but on legend, magical thinking, or other non-rational basis. Beliefs color the way we perceive the world, they direct and shape our actions, and define our personalities. Beliefs are powerful determinants of action. A useful illustration of the power of beliefs comes from the parable of the

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[5] The lead author is Gary G. Berntson, Ph.D., a Professor of Psychology, Psychiatry and Pediatrics and a member of the Neurosciences Graduate Faculty at the Ohio State University. He is a co-founder (with John Cacioppo) of the field of social neuroscience, is a co-editor of the Handbook of Psychophysiology and the Handbook of Neuroscience for the Behavioral Sciences, and is the President of the Society for Psychophysiological Research. Berntson's research focuses on the evolutionary development of the neuraxis, with special regard to levels of organization in neurobehavioral systems, affective processes and autonomic regulation. He has published over 200 articles in scientific outlets and six books.

Berntson begins with the fact that knowledge, thoughts and beliefs can influence our behaviors. Behaviors, of course, are physiological processes entailing neural operations and muscular actions. Here we see a clear intersection between the psychological domain on the one hand (knowledge, thoughts and beliefs) and the physical domain (neuromuscular effector systems) on the other. But mind-body relations extend beyond the observable actions or skeletal muscles. The mind and its organ, the brain, also impact powerfully on internal bodily functions associated with the autonomic nervous system, the endocrine system, and the immune system, to name just a few. Through these interactions, psychological processes can be translated in outcomes that have powerful significance for adaptation and health. Berntson explores the processes by which thoughts can manifest in fundamental changes in internal physiology and health.

Sultan (who had studied psychology) and his “lie-detecting” donkey. Lore has it that the Sultan was missing a valuable vase from his estate and suspected that one of his servants had stolen the piece. To identify the culprit, the Sultan gathered his servants in front of a dark room in which a donkey was tied, and then asked each of his servants if they had stolen the item. Each said “no”. The Sultan explained that inside the room was a magical donkey, specially trained to detect liars, who would bray when slapped by someone who had lied. The servants were sent into the room, one by one, and were instructed to close the door, slap the donkey and return. “When the donkey brays,” the Sultan proclaimed, “I will have my culprit”. The first servant was sent into the room and returned shortly thereafter--tremendously relieved as the donkey had not brayed. One by one, the remaining servants entered the room and returned. The donkey had not brayed and all the servants looked quite relaxed. The Sultan was sanguine -- he knew this donkey never brayed under any circumstances. The Sultan asked the servants to show him their hands. He then pointed to one of them and declared “we have our thief,” instructing the guards to take him away. How had he identified the culprit? Rather than relying on a magical donkey, the Sultan, who recall was a student of psychology, took a more rational approach. Understanding the impact of beliefs on behavior, the Sultan had surreptitiously infiltrated powdered charcoal into the donkey’s hair. When the servants slapped the donkey, the charcoal marked their hands—with the exception of the guilty servant who had not slapped the donkey, out of a belief and associated fear that the donkey could detect a liar!

Power of Beliefs

Beliefs may be potent determinants of behavior, but can they kill? And if so, how? How can these invisible, intangible entities impact health? In a now classic article published in the *American Anthropologist* in 1942, Walter Cannon, a leading Harvard physiologist and expert on the autonomic nervous system, proposed an answer (1). Investigating phenomena such as voodoo practices of the Haitians and “bone-pointing” among Australian aborigines, Cannon found a common feature among the victims of such rituals was a strong belief in the curse and an associated morbid fear of the outcome. That fear, he argued, could trigger a “fight-or-flight reaction” (a phrase he had earlier coined), characterized by powerful and exaggerated activation of the sympathetic nervous system. The resulting vascular constriction diminishes blood flow to critical tissues (i.e., ischemia), with consequent hypoxia (decreased oxygen) and disturbances in normal metabolism and cellular function. These reactions may be exacerbated by the lack of food and water as the victim “pines away.” Cannon argued that these reactions could become life-threatening—fulfilling the gruesome legacy of the ritual—based on a belief in the supernatural, the veracity of which is largely irrelevant. More relevant is the emotion triggered by the belief, specious as it may be.

Beliefs and emotions have consequences, both behavioral and physiological. A recent example comes from the contemporary medical literature. There is now a well-documented condition, sometimes triggered by something as innocuous as a spousal argument or a surprise birthday party, which entails the hallmark clinical and physiological features of a heart attack, including chest pain, abnormalities on the electrocardiogram, and elevated cardiac enzymes (reflecting damaged heart muscle) (2). The condition has variously been termed *takotsubo cardiomyopathy*, *left-ventricular apical ballooning*, *myocardial stunning*, *stress cardiomyopathy*, or in the more vernacular parlance of the New York Times, *broken heart syndrome* (prompted by a medical review that was published just before Valentine's Day). In general accord with the speculation of Cannon, broken heart syndrome appears to be triggered by an exaggerated autonomic nervous system response, characterized by sympathetic activation and high levels of the stress hormone epinephrine (adrenalin) (3). It is important to note in these cases that psychological states, as mild as they may be, are able to induce a clear and demonstrable organ pathology.

Physiological abnormalities or dysfunctions underlie medical conditions, and indeed, constitute the defining features of disease states. An important question, however, is how those dysfunctions come to be. There are many ways in which disease develops – traumatic injuries, biotic infections, degenerative conditions – and the list goes on. The fields of psychophysiology, psychosomatic or behavioral medicine, and health psychology are particularly concerned with how psychological and behavioral factors impact physiological systems and thus health. Of particular interest are those psychological dimensions that uniquely impact physiology.

An example comes from the study of Herpes Simplex viral infections. Herpes Simplex viruses are responsible for cold sores (HSV type I) and genital herpes (HSV type II). Once contracted, herpes virus infections generally remain for life, although they are characterized by periodic eruptions and remissions. During the latter, the immune system effectively dampens viral activity and the virus retreat to a more or less dormant state. Although multiple factors likely contribute to the reactivation of HSV, one trigger appears to be stress—the defacing cold sore that erupts, for example, just before the prom or an important date. Ohio State researchers sought an animal model of this reactivation, so the underlying links and mediators could be studied. Try as they might, however, the research group was unable to reactivate HSV infections in mice with standard laboratory stressors, such as restraint-stress or shock. In a collaborative effort, we pointed out that the stressors that lead to HSV reactivation in humans were often of a social nature. Indeed, for both humans and mice, social relations are central to happiness, adaptation and even survival. In light of this, a social stressor was introduced into the project (changing the housing groupings and thus disrupting established social relations). The social stress, but again not physical stressors, resulted in significant HSV reactivation (4). Psychological factors, and in this case a specific social psychological variable, uniquely impacted an important aspect of viral immunity. This early finding led to a series of studies that have elucidated physiological pathways that mediate the relationship between social stress, immune function and HSV reactivation. But, what is it that makes social stress unique and distinct from physical stressors?

We have identified a probable general contributor to the differences between lower-level physical or homeostatic challenges and higher-level psychological and social stressors. Basic homeostatic reflexes, reflexes that keep in balance various critical bodily processes such as blood pressure, body temperature, and blood sugar, are largely hard-wired and organized at relatively low levels of the nervous system, such as the brainstem and spinal cord. An example comes from autonomic nervous system regulation of cardiovascular function. The sympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system is an activational, energy mobilization system that comes into play in the face of adaptive challenges. Sympathetic activation increases heart rate and results in peripheral vasoconstriction, both of which tend to increase blood pressure. In contrast, the parasympathetic division is an energy-conserving, deactivational brake that generally opposes the sympathetic system, yielding decreases in heart rate and blood pressure. The baroreceptor heart rate reflex is a homeostatic reflex that functions to maintain blood pressure within homeostatic limits. Unique pressure sensitive receptors in the heart and large arteries detect changes in blood pressure, and a decrease in blood pressure triggers the baroreceptor heart rate reflex, increasing sympathetic activity and reciprocally decreasing parasympathetic tone. Both effects serve to increase heart rate (and thus cardiac output) and constrict arteries throughout the body, thereby restoring the pressure perturbation. In basic reflexes, the two autonomic branches are generally regulated in this reciprocal fashion, and thus synergistically amplify the effects of the other. This is a useful mechanism to adjust to severe adaptive challenges such as a decrease in blood pressure and compromised circulation.

Although this reciprocal mode of regulation of the autonomic branches has considerable utility, and is characteristic of basic reflex organizations, it may not always be optimal. The autonomic nervous system provides the basic support for action and adjustment, and although it figures prominently in survival related functions, it also provides the basic visceral support for emotional and cognitive operations as well. It has long been recognized that cognitively demanding tasks elicit greater autonomic activation than is needed to meet the metabolic demands of the tasks. Moreover, ascending neural signals to the brain from visceral organs such as the heart and blood vessels serve to modulate and regulate cognitive activities (5). The notable early psychologist, William James, proposed that emotion is the experience of somatovisceral sensory feedback. James suggested that we do not run from the bear because we are afraid, but rather we are afraid because we run from the bear (6). Although the strong form of this theory has not been supported, it remains the case that ascending visceral signals can modulate learning, attention, and cortical/cognitive processing (5). The autonomic nervous system is not only for lower level reflexive adjustments. Indeed, it is increasingly recognized that there is a highly complex, even intricate, interaction between the autonomic nervous system and higher level brain structures (e.g., frontal cortex) involved in human behavior. Importantly, these circuits and their interactions with the autonomic nervous system are highly flexible and are not constrained by the simple organization rules that govern basal functions such as homeostasis and reciprocal control of the autonomic branches. Rather, higher level systems engage in highly sophisticated "banter" with the autonomic nervous system.

In contrast to the reciprocal control characteristic of autonomic reflexes, higher level brain circuits exert more flexible control over the autonomic nervous system. This can include the classic reciprocal control pattern, but can also include an independent control pattern in which only the sympathetic branch or only the parasympathetic branch of the autonomic nervous system is activated, and a coactive control pattern in which both branches are activated. This greater flexibility in control may have behavioral and health significance.

Beliefs about One's Relationship with God and Autonomic Functioning

Recently, we used a population-based sample of 50-68-year-old adults in the Chicago Health, Aging and Social Relations Study to examine risk factors for heart attack, a health outcome known to be influenced the autonomic nervous system. We were particularly interested in whether spirituality influenced risk for heart attack. With very few exceptions, everyone in our sample expressed a belief in God. However, individuals differed in how they perceived the quality of their relationship with God, much as individuals differ in how they perceive the quality of their relationships with other people. We defined spirituality as the degree to which a personal relationship with God was believed to offer safety, security, contentment, and love. One observation that emerged from this study was that spirituality was associated with a lower incidence of heart attack (7). This remained true after ruling out the effects of demographics, health behaviors, body mass index, blood pressure, and other potential explanatory factors. Short of divine intervention, was there a rational explanation for this relationship? We certainly know that psychological factors can impact autonomic control, among other aspects of physiology.

As considered above, when extreme or prolonged, sympathetic activation may have harmful consequences. Heightened sympathetic activation is known, for example, to predict a poorer outcome after heart attack. In contrast, parasympathetic activity may have beneficial or protective effects. From the perspective of a reciprocal model of autonomic control, high parasympathetic/low sympathetic control would be optimal whereas high sympathetic/low parasympathetic control would be considered a risk. But we also know that higher level neurobehavioral systems may not be constrained to reciprocal autonomic controls. Moreover, it has been argued that more autonomic control is better than little control, in that if affords greater capacity for adjustment of visceral functions. Could high levels of parasympathetic control, for example, mitigate the negative effects of sympathetic activation and perhaps yield an even more advantageous health outcome?

To examine these questions, we developed two quantitative measures of autonomic control (7). The first was a common metric of autonomic balance (Cardiac Autonomic Balance), which represents the relative dominance of the two branches along a single autonomic continuum that ranges from purely parasympathetic control to purely sympathetic control. This metric is consistent with the classical model of reciprocal control, characteristic of reflex processes, where autonomic balance can be biased toward one or the other of the autonomic branches. High scores indicate sympathetic dominance and low scores parasympathetic dominance. Independent estimates of sympathetic and parasympathetic control were obtained using standard measurement procedures, and the level of parasympathetic control was subtracted from sympathetic control to derive a measure of Cardiac Autonomic Balance. A second metric was designed to capture an alternative mode of autonomic control (Cardiac Autonomic Regulation) that assesses the degree of relative coactivation (rather than reciprocal activation) of both branches. This is a metric that taps into the non-reciprocal regulatory influences of higher neural structures. Cardiac Autonomic Regulation scores were derived by essentially summing activities of the sympathetic and parasympathetic branches to afford a measure of total overall autonomic cardiac control. High scores indicate high activation and low scores indicate low activation of both branches of the autonomic nervous system.

In the 50-68-year-old adults in our sample, spirituality was found to be associated not only with a lower incidence of heart attack, but a higher level of Cardiac Autonomic Regulation. That is, people who felt closer in their relationship with God exhibited higher overall autonomic regulation—both sympathetic and parasympathetic. This was associated, in part, with lesser diminution of parasympathetic control and a greater degree of coactivation. Moreover, Cardiac Autonomic Regulation (but not Cardiac Autonomic Balance) predicted better overall health status and was associated with a lower incidence of heart attack. Participants who had low Cardiac Autonomic Regulation were more likely to have suffered from a heart attack.

Could higher Cardiac Autonomic Regulation scores explain why spirituality was associated with less risk for heart attack? That is, could a pattern of autonomic regulation associated with spirituality explain the link between spirituality and heart attack? In order to address this question, we conducted statistical tests of these linkages. As we already knew, both spirituality and Cardiac Autonomic Regulation are associated with a lower incidence of heart attack. When the predictive effects of spirituality were statistically extracted, Cardiac Autonomic Regulation continued to be a significant predictor of a lower incidence of heart attack. However, when the linkage test was reversed and the effects of Cardiac Autonomic Regulation were extracted, spirituality was no longer a significant predictor. This indicates that Cardiac Autonomic Regulation is a plausible mediator that may explain the relationship between spirituality and heart attack.

By capturing higher levels of parasympathetic control and the associated autonomic coactivation of the sympathetic and parasympathetic branches, Cardiac Autonomic Regulation provided a critical metric that permitted the study of a previously "invisible" and mysterious link between spirituality and health outcomes. This in no way diminishes the relationship between spirituality and health, but rather offers an important hypothesis as to how spirituality may impact physiology and health status. Spirituality reflects an important aspect of the general domain of sociality and social relationships, a domain heavily influenced by our genetic constitution as a social species. Indeed, the importance of sociality may be more related to beliefs and attitudes about the meaningfulness of relationships than their existence or number. And again, beliefs about social relationships also have real consequences.

Conclusion

Beliefs impact thoughts and actions. This may be reflected in phenomena as diverse as biasing a behavioral disposition (such as slapping a donkey), coloring our perception of the environment, or determining how we perceive the quality of our social (including spiritual) relations. Psychology can also impact physiology, and physiology, in turn, can influence our thoughts and emotions. Psychophysiology is the study of these relationships, and promises to illuminate the intricacies of psychosomatic relations and the heretofore "invisible" mechanisms that mediate these links. The relations between the mind and the body, the so-called *mind-body problem*, are complex and still rather obscure. Nevertheless, the *mind-body problem* is yielding to science, and the *problem* it poses is progressively diminishing. Among the components of the mind-body problem yielding to rigorous scientific inquiry are the effects of spiritual beliefs including feelings of closeness to God.

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The Mind and Body Are One

The Cartesian view of the mind as distinct from the body persists in twenty-first century discourse as the *mind-body problem* alluded to by Gary Berntson. Berntson provides evidence that the mind and the body, psychology and physiology, are not independent of each other but represent different levels of organization of human organisms. Beliefs influence thoughts, behaviors, and physiology, and peripheral physiological processes signal central neural networks that influence cognitions and feelings crucial for the generation and moderation of beliefs. Spiritual beliefs are considered by some to be contentious candidates for scientific examination, yet Berntson argues that spiritual beliefs can be identified, measured, and subjected to scientific investigation in the same fashion as any other belief or invisible force. Accordingly, Berntson examines the effects of a specific spiritual belief – the belief that one has a close personal relationship with God. As documented by Berntson, this belief is associated with rather profound physiological and health effects.

Whereas Berntson focuses on the influence of the mind on the body and vice versa, Gün Semin speaks of the mind in the body and, more specifically, in several bodies simultaneously. In his social cognition model, Semin challenges the limits of individual social cognition and argues that regulation and co-regulation of social behavior are distributed across brains. When several individuals exhibit spontaneous synchronized behaviors (e.g., hand-clapping), the human tendency is to invoke a “supra-individual” explanation. Semin describes a mechanism by which the supra-individual source can be explained as shared motor representations and ongoing monitoring of observed actions that, under certain conditions, lead to dissolution of the boundary between self and other. The resulting shared experience of unity and collective identity may feel transcendental, but the mechanisms are as real and explicable as those governing individual behaviors and experiences.

behavioral
likely
action
monitoring
experience
performance
continuous
interaction
motor
self
specific
actions
identifiable
synchronized
may
individual
collective
produced
tennis
phenomenon
case
synchrony
spontaneously
event
others
behavior
group
system
entrainment
clapping
emergence
neural
brain
one's
individuals
observed
cycles
person
people
situation
environment
social
movements
significant
opponent
intentions
one
sense
dissolution
game
respond
phase-locked
agency
rousing
perceived

Chapter 6[6]

The Suspension of Individual Consciousness and The Dissolution of Self and Other Boundaries

When we watch a group of soldiers marching in formation, we see the behavior of the group synchronized. Although we can make out the individual within the group, the group seems to be an entity of its own and the individual soldier seems to have become a cog in the social machine. Mob behavior, crowds at sporting events, and soldiers in formation all suggest that when we are organized to act together, the group becomes an emergent entity that can submerge the sense of the individual self. This apparent social absorption stands in contrast to our typical experience of being autonomous, self-aware agents in the world. The dissolution of the boundary between the self and the group is one manifestation of the social brain and the mechanisms that support our ability to connect with others.

Although not everyone has the experience of marching in a band or running with a mob, most people have been part of an audience at a concert or play. At the end of a particularly thrilling performance, an audience can be moved spontaneously as a group to clap wildly. In these situations, we know the feeling of surging to our feet as a collective, hands clapping and faces beaming with approval. As the clapping blooms, individual clappers merge into a synchronized unit.[1, 2] Similarly, thousands of individual sports fans have been observed to stand and raise their hands in a synchronized fashion to produce a collective wave that travels around the stadium. In both cases, individual people act as a collective unit, a superorganismal structure, with capacities and behaviors beyond the reach of any single individual in the group.

These examples are instances of behavioral uniformity in large groups. What is distinctive about these examples is that the observed behavioral synchrony can be understood in terms of a shared social goal. Sometimes the goal is spontaneous as in clapping to demonstrate appreciation and sometimes the goal is imposed by the situation (e.g., musicians following a musical score and instructions of a conductor, soldiers marching to the call of a drill sergeant). However, when we behave in synchrony with others, there is a sense of becoming part of something larger than ourselves.

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A puzzle that has occupied Semin much of his career is how it is possible to understand social behavior by explaining individual processes. Another puzzle has been why one should focus on stills when human behavior is a movie: behavior is self evidently dynamic and highly responsive to contextual variations. Finally, Semin has been puzzled by how it is possible to think that all there might be to psychological processes is some symbolic computation taking place somewhere between the ears. As outlined in this essay, he has come to conceptualize the social in terms of jointly recruited processes rather than individual ones, social behavior as situated, and psychological processes as embodied.

To the people engaged in spontaneously synchronized behavior, there is a clearly identifiable and seemingly individual 'cause' for their emergent behavior. But when a group shares the same goal—demonstrating approval—and engages in the same action—clapping—the stage is set for such behavior to become coordinated and organized even without an external agent (conductor or drill sergeant). How do those moments of spontaneous social aggregation occur? How does the social brain work to join with others to form the emergent group?

We have begun to understand the underlying dynamics of how and when such phenomena are likely to occur and even how such phenomena can be potentially engineered. New insights afforded by developments in social psychology, developmental psychology, and social neuroscience have suggested the way in which our brains respond to the invisible force of social connection. These scientific developments suggest neural mechanisms that may be important to the way we interact with others. At the same time, the insights also reveal the likely conditions under which individual self merges into the group. Such situations when the sense of self is suspended contrast sharply with the modern Western notion of the individual standing apart from others. Indeed, the traditional Western focus on individual-centered reasons, motives, intentions, and causes may be at odds with some forms of spontaneously synchronized behaviors and group action.

Towards a Biology of Social Interaction

Consider the perspective of an engaged spectator at a singles tennis match. Although we may be sitting distant from competitors, if we identify with one of the players we are not merely passive observers. On the contrary, our observation of the events in the game can serve to activate some of the same neural mechanisms that would be active if we were playing the game rather than just observing it. We can feel the moves, feel the impetus to defend an attack, and feel the urge to slam the ball as if we ourselves are playing, albeit without actually flailing our arms around. We may even anticipate a move by the opponent and imagine ourselves making the potential response. Research over the last 10 years or so has revealed that our brains can map the movements of other human beings onto our own bodies almost as if we were making those movements[3]. This ability to put ourselves in another person's shoes makes it possible to identify with either player.

By comparison to the audience, consider how this ability can serve us as one of the players. This capacity provides an important facility for anticipating our opponent's moves allowing us to plan a response even before the opponent has completed a groundstroke. This kind of anticipation does not depend on explicit reasoning or conscious reflection—it seems to operate as an automatic mechanism [3, 4]. This kind of mechanism may facilitate understanding the behavior of others. If your brain mirrors the neural activity in the brain of someone you see acting, this could provide a basis for understanding the motivation for the action. If your brain resonates to the observed action as if you were acting, this could call to mind previous experiences acting that way providing a memory for why you acted that way. That is, our social brain may directly resonate to the actions of others without reasoning explicitly about those actions. This kind of mechanism, through which intentions might be inferred, could then prepare responses quickly to facilitate the smooth flow of social interactions whether in a game or a dialogue. Of course, a critical aspect of such a mechanism is to differentiate our resonance to other people's actions and the control of our own. This kind of neural system for mapping the actions and intentions of others has been identified with a network of regions called the mirror neuron system [5], and this system may help to induce a degree of reflexive similarity or identification between self and other. The mirror neuron system appears to be continuously engaged unless it is actively suppressed by inhibition, so that this system may continuous monitor the behavior of 'others' in our social environment.

Of course, mapping the movements of the opponent is useful, but certainly not sufficient to defend our position, score a point, or win a match. One needs to execute countermoves. This is the domain of the motor system in the brain, which includes regions involved in the preparation and execution of motor action. The motor system is responsible for the implementation of one's goals and intentions to perform an action[6]. Thus, the social brain includes monitoring and motor systems that function in parallel. The mirror system puts the player in the opponent's shoes and monitors the opponent's actions in an anticipatory manner. Other parts of the social brain maintain the distinction between player and opponent by shaping the implementation of one's actions, namely by engaging a counteraction.

In sum, a tennis game or any social interaction depends on a complex network of brain regions that mediate perception and action, and the relationship between observed action and one's own behavior. The overlap in brain regions responsible for these two important social functions suggests how tightly coupled and coordinated social interactions can be. However, these two systems cannot operate in isolation from our knowledge of the context in which behavior occurs. We, therefore, turn to this topic next.

The Social Context

In a tennis game or any social interaction (e.g., dancing, conversation), the behavior of one individual constitutes a stimulus for others. If a behavior is meaningful, then neural mechanisms responsible for social perception and social interaction are likely to be activated to engage in complementary action. In a competitive context, such as the tennis game, the motor system is engaged in the preparation and execution of complementary actions to those observed and anticipated based on the inferred goals and intentions of the competitor. However, if everyone shares the same goal, for example, as in an audience clapping, the neural systems for monitoring the actions of others and executing one's own actions can be mutually reinforcing leading to synchrony.

In any dynamic social situation observing one person's action can initiate neural activity in another. Parts of the observer's motor system become activated, making it possible to respond in synchrony. In fact, the specific actions that are observed are not as important as the perceived goals or intentions of the observed person. One consequence of this is that a person is sensitive to new actions in the social environment. A second is that significant actions by another person can quickly produce complementary motor responses. Thus, adaptive social behavior is a product of perceptual monitoring and motor processes. The complexity of the social environment necessitates *selective responding to socially significant features of any social interaction.* Such selective responding depends on the observer having particular goals for action. The identification of significant stimuli (e.g., a threatening backhand smash) activates in the competitor's brain goal-driven decision processes that operate in parallel with continuous social monitoring and lead to a counteraction (e.g., a defensive lob) produced by the motor system. However, a linesman collecting a ball during a tennis match does not constitute a significant action for the competition and, even if observed, does not initiate any counteraction.

Let us now return to the perspective of a spectator at the tennis match. While the specific movements driving the tennis match have significant implications for the players' actions, these movements have a different implication for the spectator from whom no overt responses are warranted. If an observed action produced by someone else does not have personal significance for an observer, the motor system does not respond in the same way at all[7]. The goal-dependent aspect of observing the actions of others allows us to understand and respond quickly and effectively without confusing what we do with what we see. However, in some special cases, when a group of individuals all respond together, the same motor system may operate differently. It is in these situations when we are neither observer nor respondent but part of a flock or chorus that our sense of individuated self may begin to dissolve into the larger social group.

The Social Parameters for Suspended Self-Consciousness

The dissolution of self-other boundaries is likely to be manifest under a specific set of conditions, which includes a strong feeling of identification with (i.e., connection between) oneself and a group of others, the absence of constraints to action by oneself or the observed others, a common goal shared by the group, and the absence of a recognized external synchronizing signal to which one can attribute any synchronized behavior. Clapping in unison following a rousing performance is a more common example. This remarkable phenomenon is evidenced despite considerable individual differences in clapping tempos. The transition to entrained clapping, whereby each clapper affects the surrounding other clappers both locally and globally, enhances the noise intensity at the moment of the clapping even though it leads to a decrease in the overall average noise intensity in the room. Synchronized behavior occurs rhythmically and one way of capturing its regularities is to model its cycles, periods, frequencies, and amplitudes [1,2].

Depending on the particular behavior and interaction in question, behavioral cycles of interpersonal entrainment can range from milliseconds to hours. Indeed, this kind of interpersonal entrainment is a pervasive phenomenon not specific to human social behavior alone[8].

When does synchronized clapping occur? The distinctive feature of such an event is a convergence between the neural mechanisms underlying the monitoring of the movement of others and the execution of one's own movements. The specific factors responsible for the tipping point from asynchronous to synchronous clapping are not yet known, but descriptively each individual shifts the timing of his or her subsequent clap to the perceived timing of claps by the whole collective. Thus, a continuous adjustment process emerges in the form of a collective behavior (synchronized clapping) to which each individual contributes and no single individual controls. Such continuous monitoring of the collective rather than individuals within the collective and the adjustment of one's own movements to synchronize one's behavior with that of the collective result in a continuous loop of performing the very same action leading to dissolution between self and other and the emergence of an entrained unit. The resulting effect is the materialization of a *supra-individual* behavioral phenomenon, namely extended behavioral cycles that are locked together in time. Although the emergence of clapping in unison can be regarded as a phenomenon worthy of more detailed understanding, it does not induce in its performers the necessity of searching for an explanation since the readily available account is that the performance somehow produces synchronous clapping.

There is preliminary evidence that even with no externally imposed demands prolonged synchronization emerges within pairs of people interacting or *dyads*[9]. What one finds is that despite individual differences in movements, participants entrain (tap together in time) rapidly when participants can perceive the behavior of others[9]. Extensive research in coordination dynamics has demonstrated that such entrainment does not depend on the intention to coordinate behavior [10, 11]. Studies have repeatedly shown that there is a spontaneous propensity to mimic other people (generally observed in dyads). One implication this kind of behavioral synchrony is the emergence of affective bonding – such as a feeling of rapport – both in the case of *mimicry*[12] and between the synchronized partners[13]. One might conjecture that positive feelings are even stronger when more people are synchronized.

The conditions that lead to behavioral synchrony can vary. It is interesting that people may be more likely to experience the dissolution of self-other boundaries when synchronization is produced without any obvious external director and is continuous. Prolonged spontaneous and unintended entrainment among three or more people may introduce this feeling, because the emergence of synchrony cannot be attributed to a single external cause.

Conclusions

Social interaction involving extended periods of synchronized behavior are not part of our daily experience, particularly when they involve more than two people. How do we understand this kind of synchrony when it occurs? In the Western intellectual tradition, we have a strong tendency to search and explain events in terms of individual agency and causation.

Social events are generally understood in terms of contributions of the individual and the situation itself. The degree to which the person or the situational constraints shape the nature of the event will vary greatly. However, spontaneous and prolonged entrainment among three or more people introduces an experience that is difficult to explain by these more traditional accounts. These experiences cannot be easily reduced the actions of a single person, so an account has to be found in some source that goes beyond the individual. The powerful sense of unity and belonging that emerges from this kind of experience almost demands a different kind of explanation than we generally consider. Indeed, such feelings emerging from the synchrony of behavior may provide some of the foundation for the cultural interpretation of a transcendental experience.

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You and I as One

Any social group can be thought of as either a collection of individuals or as a single new entity with emergent, unified group behavior. When a mob forms to surge together down a street one way and then another; when a flock of birds wheels about together, closely clustered as they fly without colliding; and when an orchestra performs with highly coordinated timing, we momentarily forget about the individuals and see the collective behavior as a new, single social entity. Indeed, as Cacioppo discusses, many species seem to gather, flock, and coordinate to form such collectives. For humans there are many situations from flash mobs and sports teams to choirs and audiences, when people congregate in this way.

The drive for people to affiliate and group is not sufficient on its own to produce the coordinated behavior that emerges from such a collective. Sometimes an organizing signal, like the conductor of an orchestra, can synchronize the behavior. Other times common goals and behavioral constraints can synchronize a group, as in a flock of birds. In his chapter, Gün Semin discusses how such synchrony may be self-organizing – that is, it is achieved without intention, effort, or awareness by our social brains, even when there is no clear signal or constraint. In cases of such human sociality, the group may act as though it has a single mind. Indeed, Semin approaches this issue to relate the collective behavior as an embodied consequence of individual social forces that jointly operate to satisfy our need to affiliate, and to consider how connecting behavior through synchrony may create a collective mind.

Howard Nusbaum specifically discusses a different invisible social force that has evolved with the power to bind people into a collective—language. Language is the richest social signal that has the power to move people to act and to move groups to act together. In order for language to act as a force, it must somehow affect people with sufficient social and emotional impact. As Nusbaum discusses the impact of language, it operates at a social and emotional level similar to that discussed by Semin rather than exclusively through the inferences drawn from meaning.

language
impact
speech
social
connection
understanding
symbolic
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Chapter 7[7]

Action at a Distance: The Invisible Force of Language

Language is one of the most important ways in which the social brain makes connections, enhances connections, and severs connections among people. Language is our primary medium of social exchange, grounding and elaborating our selves and our relationships in every conversation. However, language goes well beyond personal connections to connect us culturally through stories, songs, and shared manners of speech. Language also provides the formal framework that defines many of our social institutions. Language gives form and substance to the governance and behavior of every social institution from education to law to religion. Clearly there are many ways in which language serves to knit us together both formally and informally. For a linguist, all of these uses can be analyzed in terms of the structure of sentences and their content. However, structure and content do not, on their own merits, provide a complete picture of how language can have the impact it does on our sense of social connection. How does language move us to act, change our feelings, and connect us to others? It seems unlikely that the impact of language is simply the result of dispassionate rational inferences and conclusions drawn from a logical analysis of sentences.

In 1976, Barbara Jordan, a Congresswoman from Texas, gave the commencement address at Brandeis University. Listening to her speak about the importance of public service and the importance of using talent and ability in service of one’s country was an impressive experience. Her delivery was clear and not particularly dramatic and yet the force of her speech was riveting. It was sufficient to turn a graduating senior’s mind from graduate school in psychology to (at least momentary) consideration of a career in government service. A student with the long-held intent of becoming a researcher and with no interest in politics, government, or public service might seem to be an immovable object. And yet, in that moment, Jordan's speech had sufficient impact to make government service seem like the only path one would want to take or should ever consider.

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We often think about language in terms of the information in newspapers or speeches or reports. However, language is basis of all our social relationships and institutions. We reward and praise with language and we shun and punish with language, perhaps more often than with any other medium. In the recent election, Democratic candidates actually gave speeches outlining different views of the importance of language in our society. One candidate held that words are simply words and only have the force that we give to them by reasoning about them. The other candidate argued that speech has the power to move people to connect and act. Nusbaum was struck by this debate because it seems to him that the power of language goes well beyond what linguists and psychologists talk about as “meaning” and that understanding the meaning of language may depend on understanding the social and emotional impact of language. In this chapter, the idea of the impact of language at a distance is explored.

Although her points were argued well, the impact of Jordan's speech was not simply rhetorical. John F. Kennedy's "Ask not what your country can do for you…." and Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I have a dream…." affected listeners deeply well beyond the cognitive strengths of a good argument. Moreover, while all these speeches were delivered beautifully and from the heart, it is not the performance of these speeches alone that can move listeners to act on behalf of others. The performance alone cannot give substance to an empty message. While there are cases in which a great performance may suggest briefly that there was content of import even in the absence of a real message, it is more likely the conjunction of message and delivery that moves people. In these speeches is a clear demonstration of the power of language. Language is more than words and more than delivery. Indeed, Cicero, in *De Oratore*, said that rhetoric conveys information, persuades listeners, and evokes emotion.

"In the beginning was the word…."

If "the word made flesh" is taken metaphorically, the power of language can be made visceral in sermons. Consider the power of Jonathan Edwards' sermon, which Clark Gilpin's chapter discusses, to terrify a congregation, to wrench them from complacency with images of torment. A sermon delivers a message, but it can do so in calm tones of instruction or with fire and brimstone. The choice and poetry of words and the cadence and intonation of speaking can draw the listener in slowly or seize the listener suddenly, the very sounds of speech painting images in the mind while igniting new inferences with literal and metaphoric descriptions.

In the realm of the spiritual, there are few corporeal manifestations that can be perceived directly. Neither heaven nor hell, neither God nor the Devil can be seen or heard or touched. Preaching is needed to spell out the work of unseen hands and will and illuminate the power of the unseen. The force of that which is not seen can only be felt when transmitted directly through speech.

In *Phaedrus*, Plato described rhetoric as the art of leading the soul. Thus it is not surprising that, while at the core of religion is a collection of beliefs and concepts and canons, the fabric and form of religion is language. Symbols and icons are certainly important, but language is the medium through which the force of theology is actualized in prayers, benedictions, sermons, and teaching. Language can reach across time and space to change minds, feelings, and behavior, encoding laws and beliefs and presenting them with a concrete reality in the here and now. This is one kind of impact from author to audience in which a kind of connection is constructed bridging minds.

At the same time, in religious practices, another kind of connection is formed within a congregation. Joint recitation, responsive reading, collective listening, and understanding may serve to connect people in a religious service. Although joint participation in any event (such as sports or theatre) may have some of the same effect as discussed by Gün Semin, the content of language and the intent of the messages in religious practice is often focused on developing and strengthening social and spiritual connections.

Everyone knows someone who moved to another country, or to another part of their own country where speech patterns differ. After a period of time, in the context of novel speech patterns, some people adopt the speech patterns around them. This kind of linguistic convergence is well documented and is moderated by social factors such as the desire to be accepted or the attempt to be persuasive.[1] When people talk together, one person's speech can impact the way another person talks in order to promote social connection. Indeed, the same kind of behavioral convergence is found over the course of conversations for other kinds of non-linguistic actions as well.[2]

Information, impact, and understanding

How does language bind us together and compel us to action, thought, and feeling? When we talk, sound vibration is transmitted from mouth to ears. Facial expressions and manual gestures punctuate, illustrate, and illuminate our speech. These acoustic and visual signals travel over space and time to the eyes and ears of the audience. The impact of such communication is true action at a distance.

This notion of language as action at a distance is relatively well accepted in the scientific study of language. But in research on language and communication by psycholinguists and linguists, the emphasis is on the information contained within an utterance and the structure and form by which this information is presented. Research questions often focus on the variety of ways the same message can be framed and how listeners interpret such messages. But little of this work addresses the impact of the message itself.

The standard view of language processing is that we hear the sounds of speech (acoustic patterns) that we translate mentally into words. The meanings of these words are determined and then the meanings combined (through our knowledge of sentence structure) to result in sentence meaning. Given that a sentence typically occurs in a context of other sentences (e.g., a sermon) or in response to other speech (e.g., a conversation), this context is then used to frame and reinterpret the sentence meaning.

Metaphor, irony, sarcasm, and other figures are generally thought of as being understood later in this process although in Gilpin's chapter the immediate power of these to affect us is quite clear. Emotion and attitudes are thought of as not understood until after the linguistic message has been determined. The impact of language on attitudes through persuasion is viewed by cognitive psychology and linguistics as occurring after the message has been understood. However, this does raise the question about whether a "message" (to be understood) is simply the linguistic properties of a sentence or the impact of the linguistic form on an audience.

A very different view of language might come from considering vocal communications that often have a direct impact on an audience.

Sometimes just listening to laughter compels listeners to laugh. Sometimes hearing a cry of terror directly imputes an instantaneous feeling of fear. Hearing someone weep can produce a feeling of sorrow and perhaps even cause one to cry. This suggests that some forms of vocal communication can elicit direct empathic sharing as Decety discusses in his chapter.

These forms of vocal communication can produce direct results in listeners without following a route of symbolic reference and interpretation.[3] Language has typically been viewed as operating by the more symbolic route because of the linguistic claim that symbols are not the things they stand for and thus must be understood—words and sentences are not felt. However, the right insult or angry words delivered in the right way or the right praise seems to be felt directly, perhaps through the same kind of mechanisms by which empathic sharing occurs.

But how is this achieved? This kind of impact of language is not a result of understanding the content of speech. It reflects social goals and motives. To the extent that this kind of social impact may parallel empathic processes, we might find that similar mechanisms are involved. Some kind of resonance must be established between a speaker and hearer, and language can serve to establish this resonance and lead to subsequent action by the hearer. This idea of a resonance in an audience does seem more compatible with the effects of vocal behavior such as laughter or crying on a listener than the symbolic interpretative view. This notion of resonance may also be useful in understanding other kinds of language impact from the fiery sermon of Edwards to the passionate speeches of Obama and Kennedy and King.

In listening to speech that has impact, language has created a state in the listener that reflects the intention of the speaker. Whether it is fear or connection, somehow language can operate as the medium by which social and emotional psychological states get transmitted to an audience. But how does this impact get created in the social brain?

Language impact in the social brain

Understanding spoken language has typically been viewed as an analytic process in which sound patterns are translated into linguistic symbols by the brain. However, an alternative theory is that we understand spoken language by using our motor system to simulate what might have been said. The idea is that trying to mentally produce the speech internally (without talking) might help us understand what is said, when speech is not clear. However, this theory did not have much neural plausibility. People do not generally move their mouths overtly or even covertly while listening.

The discovery of mirror neurons, examined at greater length by Steve Small in the next chapter, suggested one kind of mechanism that might instantiate this kind of process. In certain parts of the brain, involved in the control of action, some neurons that respond when making certain actions also respond when observing the same actions. This led to the inference that these neurons are involved in understanding the behavior of other people. The reasoning is simply that neural activity in the observer's motor system that results when seeing a behavior essentially establishes the brain state that would correspond if the observer were doing the same thing. Another way to say this is that there is a resonant response in an observer's motor system to observing a behavior and this may potentiate a degree of social coordination and connection, as discussed in Semin's chapter. This kind of neural resonance has been shown to play a role in understanding speech when seeing a talker's mouth move, even if the listener does not actually make any mouth movements.

Mirror neurons demonstrate that observed action can produce a resonant response in an observer's brain. Seeing a talker's mouth move creates a motor-resonant response that aids in understanding speech sounds. However, these two observations are very different from the idea that the meaning of sentences can create a resonant response in the listener's brain. In the case of speech, mouth movements are the actions that create speech. This might seem like a very special case. The traditional linguistic view of language is that words and sentences are symbolic: Language describing action is not action itself. Language describing emotion is not the emotion itself. The entire concept of a symbol is that a symbol denotes something, stands for something, but the symbol is not the thing itself. But it now appears that this long-held notion may be wrong.

The idea that seeing an object or event gives rise to brain states that resonate with previous experiences of that thing suggests a mechanism for language understanding to go beyond symbolic interpretation. Given that there is a brain mechanism for re-experiencing actions or sensations, this same mechanism may operate even when there is just a symbolic linguistic description. Understanding language may take place by invoking such resonant past experiences in the brain.

For example, when listening to sentences about hockey action, hockey players show neural activity in their motor system which is not seen for people who are naïve to hockey.[4] Experience playing hockey recruits the motor system in service of understanding hockey sentences as if one were watching or playing hockey when only listening to speech. This suggests one way in which language can have a direct impact on a listener. Rather than making inferences about actions based on the meanings of sentences, understanding a sentence may be a resonant motor system response in the listener to a description of an action. If this idea is extended more broadly, language impact may come from such resonant responses. Language understanding and the impact of language may result from processes more similar to the effects of hearing laughter. Hearing a sentence may create in a listener a set of resonant responses very similar to the patterns that correspond to the actual situations being described.

Such resonant responses need not be confined to the motor system and actions. Emotions such as fear or joy may be empathically evoked in listeners by speech just as a scream or laughter might. Verbal expression of attitudes may produce similar attitudinal responses in listeners. Moreover, if a listener's resonant response is strong, there may be increased empathic overlap with the speaker, which may serve to increase social connection. To the extent that people speak together and share feelings, social connection may increase as well.

Evolution of social connection by communication

The human social brain constructs connection and understanding by anthropomorphic projection as discussed by Nick Epley in his chapter. When we observe the behavior of nonhuman entities, anthropomorphic projection may form a feeling of social connection. Social connection depends in part on empathic responses to observed action. It has been argued that this same foundation is the basis for the evolution of language as well--observed action may be the foundation for language.[5]

A mirror neuron theory of the evolution of language starts with the assumption that we understand others by observing their actions. Communication depends on the regularization of typical actions that can be pantomimed. In principle this could lead to a kind of manual gestural system of communication akin to sign language. Hand and arm movements can depict a wide range of actions both by first-person depiction of an action such as screwing the top onto a jar and by third-person depictions such as using the fingers to portray a person walking. Hand and arm postures can depict objects such as a cupped hand representing a bowl. Combining sequences of such object and action depictions can communicate relatively complex messages even without a formal language. This is a far cry from sign languages in which the mapping between hand shapes and movements is not visually transparent in this way. But as the pressure to communicate a broader range of messages increases, a manual gestural language would have to be modified to reflect more abstract symbols ultimately leading in the direction of a sign language.

However, this kind of manual language has one major drawback. Communication depends on visual contact. In order to understand a gestural message it is necessary to see the hand movements. This limits the distances over which communication can take place. Moreover, a communication system that is effective for a group should not depend on face-to-face dyadic interaction, but allow for more broadcast communications. There is a great survival advantage in being able to maintain social connection and convey information over distances that go well beyond face-to-face communication.

Many species of fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals commonly exchange information at a distance through vocalizations. The learned songs (and some calls) of songbirds are particularly rich sources of information conveying, to the receiver, individual identity and a host of other characteristics of the sender. Some mammals exchange information at great distances through calling behavior. Humpback whale vocalizations are perceived over extremely long distances and may be used to maintain social groups at distances as great as 5 km. African elephants can recognize friends and relatives from their calls at a distance of 2.5 km. Human sheepherders keep each other company from the top of one mountain to another in the Canary Islands using a whistled language called Silbo Gomero. Whether for purposes of mating, threat, warning, or social organization, conveying information regarding location, identity and motivation, and directed at one individual or towards far-flung groups, vocal communication plays an important role in the social connection and behavior of a great number of vertebrate species. Thus while human vocal communication is enhanced substantially in face-to-face interaction, the evolution of speech has resulted in a system that can function even in the absence of direct visual observation. The sound of a threat or warning or distress can have substantial impact even at a distance from the speaker.

Social impact and embodied language

Many animals use vocalizations to maintain social group structure and to provide information relevant to a group. Even very young children use the way people speak as a marker of their social affiliation.[6] Such vocalizations are typically not viewed as symbolic forms that must be decoded and interpreted. Instead these vocalizations are mapped onto internal states more directly, much as human laughter may be. Although linguists and psychologists have often tried to differentiate human language from these kinds of vocalizations, language can impact us in much the same way. Perhaps language is less symbolic and more direct than scientists have thought.

What does it mean for language to have impact? If we take laughter as our model, perhaps it means that language gives rise to responses that have a direct effect on our perceptual and motor systems. Sermons may terrify because they create worlds inside of the listener that seem real. We can see and hear torment and imagine the feelings of pain and suffering. This is not a symbolic interpretation but a real experience created from language. However, just as we can distinguish the pain we feel from the pain of others, even when we have strong empathic responses, we can distinguish such created experiences from those that occur in the real world. The stronger the language, the richer the imagery, the more intense the delivery, the more salient the mentally created experience. One impact of language may be to create real feelings and sensations, imagined movement and behavior.[7] When language hurts us through criticism, rejection or insult, it may do so by activating our experiences of real pain. When we are soothed by language, it may produce the same kind of endorphin effect that placebo treatments can invoke. When language binds us together, it may do so by creating the kind of shared emotional states that characterize empathy.

In many respects, the linguistic view of language use does not engage these ways in which language functions. Linguistics treats language as consisting of patterns of symbols divorced from their origins in a human mouth, almost like print on a page rather than speech. But it is spoken language that the social brain evolved to use—print is a very modern invention which did not play any role in our evolution. In contrast, speech is produced from a coordinate action of muscles compressing lungs and moving tongue and jaw under the control of neurophysiology and hormones. Unlike the shape of printed letters, the sound of speech is shaped by attitude and emotion and intent, and its impact may be to transfer specific embodied states from the speaker to the listener.

Conclusion

Although physicists have debated the possibility of action at a distance for quite some time, the biological form of action at a distance is well established, achieved through vocal communication in an extremely broad range of behaviors and settings. The force of language is carried by the form, content, and delivery of a message. And the impact of this force may be created in the minds of an audience by the resonant invocation of past real experiences. Real pain and sorrow, real comfort and joy, real love and caring, are all part of our shared human experience. The impact of language may come by invoking resonant past experiences that can create a platonic mental moment that flickers with the shadows of those experiences. In order to understand how this process works, we need to study how brain mechanisms operate to translate the sounds of speech into the impact of language.

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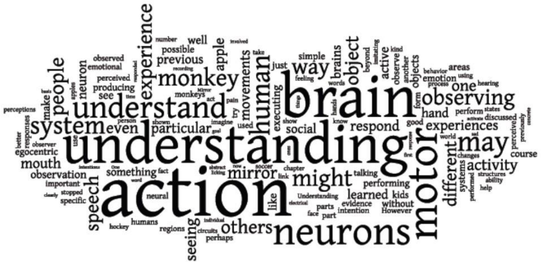
Systems and Signals for Social Coordination

How do we understand each other as people? Do we take people at their word, or do actions speak even louder? When moved to affiliate and to act in concert with other people as a group, we need to understand the communications and actions of others. Language can move us to action even across great distances but how does it do so? While we can observe the behavior of groups of people as coordinated, the mechanism of achieving this coordination is unseen. We may be driven socially to form groups but how does that drive function in the individual to cause us to cohere. In order to go beyond the observation and experiences we have with groups and group behavior, we need to understand what makes the engine of social connection run. At one level, we can talk about language as a force itself, as Howard Nusbaum does. We can talk about the synchronization of individual behavior as Gün Semin does. However, both of these are observations about the way individuals may become part of a group. To go beyond this we must look to our biology to understand how the machinery underneath our sociality leads to connected minds.

Semin suggested one way our brains may seek to connect. Some neurons in an area of the brain that is involved in the control and planning of our actions also respond when we observe actions we have performed. Such neurons might be thought to "resonate" when seeing someone act or speak with our own experiences. Neurons that mirror actions and behavior have been thought to play a role in the process of understanding that behavior and the social connection that may form as a result of the resonance. In the next essay, Steve Small discusses these neural mechanisms and how they may be important in helping us understand spoken language and possibly in understanding social behavior.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Chapter 8[8]

Hidden Forces in Understanding Others: Mirror Neurons and Neurobiological Underpinnings

It is one thing to perceive objects in the environment and another to *understand* what is perceived. A rodent that senses an apple definitely has a notion that this represents something edible. A monkey might realize that the apple can be eaten but also can be thrown. A human might perceive it as a food, an object to be propelled, a temptation that should be resisted, or something that falls out of a tree at a specific acceleration. For each individual animal or person, understanding an apple means to take the sensory perceptions of the apple and to use previous experience and knowledge to fit it into an overall context. In this way, understanding a particular apple depends on our previously having seen, touched, and smelled apples, eaten them, read about them, and perhaps even been hit by a falling or thrown apple. All of our previous experiences come to bear every time we encounter a new perception that we must make sense of, and of course, this represents virtually every moment of our waking lives.

Our perceptions vary enormously from seeing simple objects (e.g., apples), taking in more complex entities (e.g., restaurants, neighborhoods), hearing noises or speech, and seeing actions (e.g., simple manual actions, sporting events). A major question for brain research is how we can possibly understand all these different kinds of input, and what brain circuits are used to do so. We assume that such an understanding means taking these inputs, weighing them against our previous experiences in some way or other, and then integrating in some way the new and old together. This integration requires constant and dynamic changes to the brain structures that represent what we know and how we use it.[1] One way this could happen is that when we perceive something new, we actually re-enact in our mind's eye the previous related perceptions. For example, if we encounter an apple – having encountered many previously -- perhaps we actually imagine (seeing) one or more previous apples or episodes involving apples, or imagine (performing) one or more instances of biting an apple or throwing one, and/or imagine tasting and smelling one. We might also imagine hearing the word "apple", producing the sounds of the word, seeing the written form of the word, or even hearing, seeing, or producing synonyms or related words in our first (e.g., "Granny Smith") or second (e.g., "pomme") languages. We propose that understanding an apple is tantamount to executing this entire set of processes, and thus, that the circuits for understanding are very complicated and take up a large portion of the brain.

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Human language represents a unique product of our social species and the tremendous evolution of the primate cerebral cortex simultaneously supported the development of both. Language is the defining feature of our species: In his 12th century volume, *Guide to the Perplexed*, Maimonides viewed it as tautological that man is a speaking animal, i.e., "there is no third element besides life and speech in the definition of man". But how does the brain implement this unique function in the context of its common ontogeny with social function? The current essay discusses the possibility that the recently discovered "mirror neurons" of the cerebral cortex of macaque monkeys play a special role in the ability of humans to understand each other with language by using a mechanism of observation and covert emulation. If the neurobiology of language were partly grounded on such systems of visual observation and imitation, this would overlap integrally with the biology of the social brain.

Of course, not all of what we understand is directly available to the senses; we can clearly understand beliefs and emotions as well as physical objects and overt actions. Brain researchers generally take the view that previous experience guides understanding of abstract concepts in much the same way that it guides the understanding of the more concrete entities. For example, we can understand the emotional states of other people by imagining being in those states ourselves. When I see someone feeling happy or sad, I can evoke examples from my own previous experience of feeling happy or sad (perhaps even for the same reasons), and by feeling the emotion, I can understand it. The closer my previous experience is to the perceived one, the better the "understanding". This principle holds whether one is trying to understand objects or people. An important distinction between people and objects when trying to understand their actions is that people, but not objects, have intentions.

The Social Brain

The critical question for neurobiologists is how does the brain understand. In particular, we want to know whether the same brain circuits that are used when we experience things personally are also used when we try to understand another person having the same experiences, whether these experiences are concrete, like grasping a cup or hitting a baseball, or more abstract like feeling sad or fearful or in pain. We also want to know whether understanding the simple concrete perceptions and these highly complex emotional states are mediated similarly in the brain. Further, we are interested in the overlap between conscious and unconscious understanding and shared or personal understanding. One way to address these questions is to examine the brain structures responsible for specific types of personal sensations, actions, and cognitive processes, and to see if these same ones play a role when individuals attempt to understand these functions in others. Using modern techniques of physiology, experiments of this type have been conducted in both monkeys and humans, with some surprising results.

It is now possible to measure brain activity of humans while having a wide range of different kinds of experiences. Such human neuroimaging experiments have suggested that understanding actions and objects invoke some of the same brain structures used to perform the actions and to act on the objects. With respect to actions in particular, humans sometimes use their own motor repertoire in interpreting actions, possibly by imagining or mentally simulating the perceived action. When people are asked to observe the actions of others, particularly goal-directed actions involving the hands or mouth, they seem to activate brain regions for moving the hands or mouth. Thus, there is a link between observing actions and executing actions. This has a relevance to education as well: "Understanding by doing" (i.e., by observing and then executing) has a long and valued tradition in American education[2], and these recent scientific results might help us understand why this is effective.

When my son was 5 years old, he was a member of a kids' soccer team in Hyde Park, on the campus of the University of Chicago. His coach was a professor of history at the university, a woman who had never played soccer, but was a voracious reader, and in her readings on the subject, took careful note of all the methods needed to play soccer as well as the rules and regulations. She methodically took the kids through all the (theoretically relevant motor) steps needed to dribble the ball, to pass, and to shoot – flex your foot this way, bend your leg that way, keep your arms this way, etc. The kids tried to follow the verbal instructions but their motor performance was less than stellar — they learned a little bit, but they lost all of their dozen games, for a depressing 0-12 record. The next season, the same team was coached by another volunteer parent, this time an engineer from Trinidad, who had played soccer his whole life. The instructions he gave the kids were quite different: "Follow me and do what I do". There were no suggested foot flexions or extensions, and no specific leg movements proposed. The kids learned the skills, and won all their games. Why? The kids learned by observing a good model and then imitating what they observed the person doing, which appears to be a way to learn motor skills that is far stronger than that of explicit motor instruction.

When people have strokes, a part of their brain dies, and they can lose the ability to speak or use a hand properly. We are now using this idea of imitation in a treatment program to re-educate people with strokes to use their hands better and to pronounce words better. For these imitation-based treatments, people first observe a particular hand action or speech sample on a video monitor, and then they try to produce it. In fact, they observe it over and over again for a while before they even try to do it at all. They are never told *how* to move their hands or mouths; they are just told to copy what they see. Over the course of six weeks, people with hand problems progress from imitating a simple grasp of a cup to picking up a telephone and dialing a number to picking up a toothbrush, brushing their teeth, and returning the brush to the sink. Those with speech problems progress from imitating simple words of a single syllable to longer less common words and even short phrases. We have already shown that these therapies have beneficial effects in a number of people and are now trying it out more extensively.

There seems to be an important link between observing and executing actions. Similarly, there is a link between observing action and understanding emotion. This link has been most clearly demonstrated in the case of facial expressions – if I observe the muscles of the face in a position to convey an emotional state, clearly I perceive the emotion. What has been shown recently is that observing such facial expressions leads to two kinds of brain activations in the observer: The first set of regions activated are those that would be used by the observer to execute the identical face movements, just as with hand or mouth movements. However, additional regions are also active, and these are precisely the ones that would be involved if the observer were to feel the observed emotion personally. Thus the circuitry for action observation in the human brain is interdependent with parts of the brain critical for understanding more complex nuanced aspects of the world.

Mirror Neurons

It turns out that there may be cellular building blocks in the brain that are particularly important for observing and executing actions, and may ultimately lead to an explanation of action understanding and imitation-based learning. In fact, such structures would contribute to any form of understanding that could be partly explained by imagined re-enactment of perceived actions (e.g., seeing an emotional facial expression, hearing a cry of pain). The cells under discussion are a type of nerve cell, or neuron, discovered in the front part of the monkey brain by Professor Giacomo Rizzolatti and his colleagues at the University of Parma. The scientists trained monkeys to perform specific actions like grasping an object or licking their lips, and were performing electrical recordings in regions in the front of the brain known to coordinate movements. These recording machines note brain activity both visually, as a graph on a screen, and auditorily, by a loud series of clicks, indicating the firing of a neuron. Rizzolatti and his team were focusing on a particular region in the front of the brain, and were having the monkey perform all sorts of hand, mouth, and eye movements to see how the brain cells were organized to make these movements happen. One day (or so the story goes), one of the researchers returned from lunch while the electrical recordings were being made, and was finishing off a cone of superb Italian gelato, when all of a sudden the recording device starting making a loud series of clicks. The returning scientist stopped licking his ice cream cone to see what was going on, and the noise stopped. When he restarted licking his gelato, the clicks resumed, and when he stopped again, they stopped. The investigators had discovered a type of neuron that was sensitive to the monkey observing a particular human action.

It was not surprising that following training to perform an action, some neurons in the motor region of the brain responded while performing that action, when the same neurons would not have responded beforehand. However, it was extremely surprising to find that some of those neurons also responded vigorously when the monkey *observed* the very same learned actions. Through a methodical and systematic approach, this group was able to make a more elaborate and far-reaching set of observations. For a small subset of neurons, if a monkey had learned to reach for a particular object, seeing another monkey reach for the same object would cause the neuron to fire. For a different subset of neurons, if the monkey had learned to pucker up his lips, the neuron would fire both when the monkey did this or when the monkey observed another monkey (or even a human) doing this. These motor neurons have been dubbed "mirror neurons", since they respond during both execution of action and during observation of the same action in a mirror-like fashion.[3] Mirror neurons are not active during observation of an appropriate action if there is no goal (i.e., the object is absent) or when an appropriate object is presented alone. Mirror neurons have been discovered both for mouth actions and hand actions, and for both visual and auditory perception of actions.

Seeing a previously learned action performed by someone else seems to resonate in some neurons in the motor system almost as if the action were being performed by the observer. It is as if the observed action stimulates some motor neurons to "remember" what it was like to perform action. Of course, this is not memory in the overt sense of conscious recollection, but rather that the experience of execution changes the response of the neurons to observation. Not all the motor neurons respond this way but a small number have been shown to respond when performing and observing an action. Such mirror neurons could provide a correspondence between the experience one has of performing an action and seeing the same action performed by others.

These mirror neurons might provide one basis for understanding action. Relating actions we observe to actions we have carried out seems like an important component for comprehension. After all, we knew what we were doing when we performed an action. If that experience is somehow reinstated during observation we might attribute our past experience as the interpretation of the present observation. Imitation when observing an action might occur because our motor system is stimulated by observing an action. Coordination of action could occur because in representing others' actions as if they were our own, our brains may be able to compute the time when we can act without disrupting the other person. This is just the kind of process that is described in Gun Semin's chapter when he describes how groups of people can synchronize their actions like clapping together.

From monkey brains to human intention

Of course, relating responses in monkey brains to human brains is neither direct nor simple. Parts of the monkey brain and and parts of the human brain that putatively correspond, while similar, are not identical in number or size or location, and probably do not do exactly the same things, since monkeys and humans have evolved to have somewhat different capacities and behaviors. Furthermore, the study of mirror neurons in monkeys is based on recording the responses of individual neurons, which is not generally possible in humans except in rare cases of medical necessity. The measures we can make on intact human brains come from the responses of many thousands of neurons, so it is difficult to make claims about neurons that respond in producing an action and perceiving the same action. This means that any claims about human mirror neurons depend on a degree of good faith and inference rather than specific empirical demonstration that individual neurons respond both to observing and executing action.

Researchers have measured human brain responses using a variety of methods such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), which demonstrate reliable effects of changes in neural activity by changes in blood flow. Although slower to respond than measures of electrical activity, fMRI provides evidence about where neural activity in the human brain occurs. This kind of research does show that observing action produces activity in areas of the human brain more typically associated with executing action. While there may be some disagreement about which motor areas of the human brain are active while observing or imitating action and how these would correspond to areas in the monkey brain, there is good agreement that the human motor system responds for observation and imitation of action.[4]

There is quite a difference between recognizing an action and understanding that action. We can see a hand move through space with an open palm oriented with the flat of the palm moving toward the surface of an object and predict where the hand will strike the object and that it will apply force to the surface of that object. But understanding the same general action as pushing a door open with the intent to enter and slapping a person in the face is quite different. A ball can be thrown in a game of catch or as a missile intended to do harm. The actions may be similar but the intentions are different. Therefore it is important that some researchers have argued that mirror neurons respond to the intention as well as the action.[5] However, to date there has been no clear evidence that such neurons respond to intention -- just that the sight of the action of reaching without an object to grasp, the sight of the object alone, and the sight of the action with the object present show different patterns of brain response. The fact that such different visual experiences lead to different patterns of brain activity does not provide clear evidence that intentions or goals are somehow part of the mirror neuron response to observed action.

Understanding spoken language as action understanding

The potential ambiguity of action is perhaps clearest if we consider language. Talking is a form of action and understanding speech might be a form of action understanding. In talking, mouth movements are made in such a way as to create sounds that will have some affect on the listener, as discussed in Howard Nusbaum's chapter. Listeners must understand what was meant by making those sounds. However, if someone says, "It's hot in here," or "You are a great friend," there can be ambiguity about the meaning. Such sentences could be straightforward observations as they seem to be or they could be something very different. We can ask to have a window opened or we can make a negative social comment using exactly the same sentences.

Nonetheless, there is good reason to believe that the human action system is involved in understanding speech as well as producing it. While some ambiguities in speech or behavior simply cannot be resolved without broader contextual knowledge, the motor system may be important in understanding. If you try to have a conversation in a noisy bar, looking at your friend talking makes it easier to understand what is being said. We have shown that the motor system contributes to this process of recognizing speech. When listeners can see someone's face while talking, mouth movements increase activity within the motor system measured using fMRI. Furthermore, it is possible to show that the same parts of the motor system can be active in talking and in understanding speech. By analyzing which parts of the brain are active and when they become active, it is possible to show that when motor system activity in the frontal lobe of the brain precedes activity in other regions (e.g., the temporal lobe), listeners have a better understanding.[6] It is as if the motor system "recognizes" the speech before other parts of the brain when the talking mouth is visible to the listener.

This study shows that more information about the action of producing speech (visible mouth movements) can activate the motor areas of the brain during understanding of speech. But it is also the case that understanding speech without seeing the speaker depends on the motor system. Hockey players are experts at hitting slap shots, blocking passes, and whacking each other in the head with hockey sticks. They have done these things in the real world just as monkeys in Parma have learned to reach for certain objects. When hockey players listen to sentences describing hockey action, even without seeing the speaker or the action, motor areas are active during sentence understanding and these same motor areas are not active in people without hockey experience.[7] Understanding described actions appears to be influenced by the motor systems of people who have experience with those actions. Understanding action may be influenced by the experiences of our motor systems.

Reading minds through action

In understanding other people, we start with what we understand about ourselves. As Nick Epley describes in his chapter, we take this kind of egocentric perspective in understanding other people or pets or God or the behavior of inanimate objects. We know what we meant when we say something or do something and we make the same attribution to others, even nonhuman others. While this may be a good starting point for religions to help people feel connected to God, as discussed by Clark Gilpin, it may not be uniformly informative about human behavior. Behavior is not transparent for the intention of that behavior. The fact that any particular action is not necessarily unique to the intent behind it is the basis of a great deal of misunderstanding in daily interactions. As a result, even if mirror neurons help our brains recognize actions and sometimes interpret them, there are real limits to how experience-producing actions can correctly inform social understanding.

In spite of this limitation, we may often do just this—assume we understand another's actions because of what we would intend were we to do the same thing in the same circumstance. Human social understanding does suffer egocentric limitations often and to the extent that it does, something like a mirror neuron system may play a role. For example, as discussed by Jean Decety in his chapter, our ability to understand the pain of others may derive in part from the neural systems involved in our experience of pain, but goes beyond this starting point. The social brain is on one level perhaps a very egocentric brain. But the fundamental motivation to connect with others has resulted in systems built on top of these egocentric foundations. If social understanding depended entirely on past experiences of our own intentions and actions, there might be much more misunderstanding and cynicism in the world. However, the capacity to reason, hypothesize, and model possible futures may increase social understanding beyond the anchor of purely egocentric perspective. We can conceive of alternatives to our own goals and motives and relate those alternatives to the actions we observe. To some extent, this process might also involve the motor system by mentally simulating actions and anticipated responses. By imagining how we might act in some situation to achieve a goal or the alternative ways we may act given some intention, it may be possible to go beyond the limits of our own experience. Such constructive imagery may well depend on the motor system, along with other neural systems, but currently there is no scientific evidence that such a system might be linked with the operation of mirror neurons.

Conclusion

We are equipped to understand the world around us by relating what we perceive to our own experiences. With respect to actions in particular, our brains have specialized circuitry to relate previously executed actions to newly perceived ones, possibly by performing an internal (imagined) simulation of them. There is evidence too that we might understand the emotional states of others by a similar kind of process, whereby our brains activate circuits for experiencing the emotion as a way to understand that emotion in others. These brain mechanisms might also apply (to a greater or lesser degree) when we try to understand actions or feelings by non-human animals or even inanimate entities. This could be a partial biological explanation of anthropomorphism, as discussed by Epley and Gilpin. Of course as humans we have the ability to go beyond these strict egocentric limitations and recognize and respond to our social connections more explicitly. This ability to go beyond the more basic grounding of the way we understand others may subserve part of the goal of some religions, discussed by Kathryn Tanner, in fostering a more abstract view of our connection to others. While a mirror neuron system might help form the basis for some aspects of social understanding, there may well be other invisible forces at work supported by these and other neural systems in our social brain.

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Connecting and Binding Social Brains and Minds

We evolved as social organisms in the context of face-to-face interaction. Much of our human biology was established before the technology of email and cell phones. As a result, our biological nature is tuned primarily to social signals and interaction that occurs in the presence of another. It takes just a moment of observation for us to know a lot about another person as a social being. We can understand other speakers easily within tens of milliseconds of experience. Our brains have developed to make this kind of social connection quickly and easily, whether through language or action. In order to understand someone else, we need to be able to understand their goals and intentions. Moreover we need to relate their behavior to our own individual and personal experience. Steve Small discusses some of the brain machinery that may allow us to translate our perception of language and observation of behavior into a form that can be related to our own use of language and action. This kind of resonance with experience, rather than elaborate inferences, may allow us to connect quickly with others, satisfying our drive for sociality.

But understanding behavior and communication is not all there is to forming social connections. It is one thing to read intentions and another to feel someone's pain. If we only could understand action and communication, an important element of human connection would be missing. In forming a collective mind, as Gün Semin discusses it, we need to have collective emotional responses. Jean Decety discusses the foundations of empathy and the brain machinery that supports this important capacity by providing a resonant response to the observation of another person's distress. Although sympathy may motivate helping others, empathy may be one of the social glues that binds us together as a collective social organism.

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Chapter 9[9]

Empathy and Interpersonal Sensitivity

A young girl, after watching a televised documentary account of child hunger and suffering in Bangladesh, pleads with her parents to "do something" to help them. A new child in daycare is being ignored by the other children with the exception of one little boy who takes her hand and includes her in all his activities. These modest beginnings signal the important and ongoing role of empathy for surviving and flourishing in our social world. Empathy has been suggested to be essential to navigating the social world; it enhances our understanding of others, improves the effectiveness of our social communication, and fosters mutually satisfying social relationships. Conversely, lack of empathy or its maladaptive use causes social relationships to falter and fail.

Empathy refers to our natural capacity to quickly and automatically relate to the emotional states of another person. Rudimentary forms of empathy appear early in the life course, and with maturation, empathy can be experienced by simply reading about or imagining someone else's emotion. Empathy comes so naturally that physicians must learn to dampen their empathic pain responses when inserting a needle into a patient (1). Just because empathy comes naturally does not mean, however, that it is instantiated in a discrete brain module that is automatically activated when one witnesses another's distress or suffering. Rather, the experience of empathy is underpinned by the combined activity of several dissociable psychobiological systems. Further, empathy can be modulated by various contextual, dispositional, and interpersonal factors. The study of empathy, using sophisticated methods from psychology, neurology, neuroimaging, and neuropsychology, provide a unique opportunity to understand the invisible power of empathy in shaping our obligatorily gregarious social nature.

Defining empathy and its functions

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Empathy and sympathy play crucial roles in much of human social interaction and are necessary components for healthy co-existence. Sympathy is thought to have a key role in motivating prosocial behavior, guides our preferences and behavioral responses, and provides the affective and motivational base for moral development. Although the study of these abilities has traditionally been examined using behavioral and clinical methods, recent work in social neuroscience has begun to provide compelling and novel insights on the neural mechanisms involved in interpersonal sensitivity. These developments are explored in this essay.

Empathy can be defined as our natural capacity to share, appreciate, and respond to the affective states of others. This capacity is essential for the regulation of social interactions. For instance, empathy is believed to motivate prosocial behavior and inhibit aggressive behavior (2). In addition, our ability to share the emotions of those we observe binds us to each other and fosters a collective social identity. Empathy's invisible power is that it moves us to cooperate, coordinate our behaviors, and provide the needed care for one another. Notably, however, empathic concern does not necessarily lead to empathic behavior. First, empathy poses a paradox, as sharing of feelings does not necessarily imply that one will act or even feel impelled to act in a supportive or sympathetic way. Second, the complexity of the social and emotional situations eliciting empathic concern influences the probability and nature of the help provided. Whether and how empathic actions are expressed depends on the feelings we perceive in the other, our relationship with that individual, and the context in which we share an emotional state.

Empathy is critical for complex human interactions, but this does not mean that empathy and prosocial behavior have suddenly appeared with *Homo sapiens*. If empathy is a potent invisible force generated by the social brain, some form of emotion-sharing should also be evident in other social species such as non-human primates. Indeed, field observations conducted by comparative psychologists and ethologists suggest that behaviors homologous to empathy can be found in non-human primates (2). Some have argued that empathy is not an all-or-nothing phenomenon, and that many intermediate forms of empathy exist between the extremes of mere agitation at the distress of another and full understanding of their predicaments (3). Many comparative psychologists view empathy as a kind of induction process by which emotions, both positive and negative, are shared, and which increase the probability that the protagonists will subsequently engage in similar behavior.

Though certain non-human primates may share feelings between individuals, humans seem to have the unique ability to intentionally "feel for" and act on behalf of other individuals whose experiences may differ greatly from their own. Such a capacity may help explain why empathic concern is often associated with prosocial behaviors such as helping kin, and why it has been considered the foundation for altruism, the expression of empathy and caring for those who are not kin. Evolutionary biologists have suggested that empathic helping behavior evolved because of its contribution to genetic fitness (kin selection). In humans and other mammals, an impulse to care for offspring is almost certainly genetically hard-wired. Less clear, however, is whether an impulse to care for siblings, more remote kin, and similar non-kin is genetically hard-wired. The emergence of altruism is not easily explained within the framework of neo-Darwinian theories of natural selection (but see Cacioppo's chapter on this point). Social learning explanations of kinship patterns in human helping behavior are thus highly plausible. Indeed, one of the most striking aspects of human empathy is that it can be felt for virtually any "target," even targets of a different species (animals included). We can see a deer hurt by a passing car or the dogs locked in crates at a shelter and feel strongly for their pain or confinement and future. In part, this kind of empathic extension may be motivated by the kind of anthropomorphic attitudes we have about non-human entities as discussed by Nick Epley in his chapter. The fact that we are adept at "feeling for" very different others whom we can observe but not truly understand suggests that we possess a capacity to cognitively re-represent others in our mind in a way we can understand. Indeed, second-order representation is a key component of empathy in humans, and may be a useful adaptation for human survival because it maximizes the range of individuals with whom we can form a social bond.

The Components of Empathy

The psychological components that make up full-blown empathy are supported by distinct and separable psychobiological systems. Empathy can be decomposed into an affective component that includes the perception and sharing of an emotional state observed in another individual, and a cognitive component that includes the motivation and intention to respond. Closely related is a regulatory component that involves adjustment of one's emotional and behavioral response. The affective, cognitive, and regulatory aspects of empathy involve interacting, yet partially non-overlapping neural circuits. The initial component in the overall process leading to empathy draws on somatic mimicry, also known as "emotion contagion." This affective component of empathy develops earlier than the cognitive component. Affective responsiveness is present at an early age, is involuntary, and relies on mimicry and linking of actions perceived in others with actions in oneself (i.e., perception-action coupling). For instance, newborns and infants become vigorously distressed shortly after another infant begins to cry. Facial mimicry of basic emotional expressions also contributes to affective sharing, and this phenomenon starts very early in life, by approximately 10 weeks of age. This primitive mimicry mechanism, which may be based on mirror neurons, which are sensorimotor neurons found in the premotor, motor, and posterior parietal cortex of the brain that become active when observing as well as when enacting a behavior as discussed in Steven Small's chapter. This kind of mechanism may contribute to the development of empathy in the early preverbal period, and continues to operate past childhood. There is evidence that when we perceive emotions and actions of others, we use the same neural circuits as when we produce the same emotions and actions ourselves (e.g., watching another individual being disgusted and experiencing disgust in oneself activate similar neural circuits). For instance, viewing facial expressions triggers expressions on one's own face, even without explicit identification of what we're seeing (4).

The cognitive component of empathy is closely related to processes involved in "theory of mind" (i.e., the ability to attribute mental states to others and to understand that others' mental states can differ from one's own) and self-regulation. The capacity for two people to resonate with each other emotionally, prior to any cognitive understanding, is the basis for developing shared emotional meanings, but it is not enough for mature empathic understanding and concern. Such an understanding requires the observer to form an explicit representation of the feelings of another person, a process that involves additional mechanisms beyond the sharing of emotion and includes self-regulatory mechanisms to modulate the observer's experience of negative arousal. Specifically, in order to understand the emotions and feelings of others in relation to oneself, second-order representations of the other must be consciously available and must not confuse the other with the self. The medial and ventromedial prefrontal cortices are known to play crucial roles in decoupling first-person and third-person information and maintaining representations of the other as distinct from the self (5).

The regulatory component of empathy, especially regulation of internal emotional states and processes, is particularly relevant to the modulation of vicarious emotion and the experience of empathy as well as sympathy. Empathy is unlikely to lead to helping behavior if the observer is incapacitated by strong empathically evoked emotions, which is why emotional regulation is an important component in empathy. Indeed, children high in effortful control show greater empathic concern, and the tendency to experience empathy and sympathy versus personal distress varies as a function of their ability to regulate their emotions more generally.

How We Perceive Other People in Pain

When witnessing another person experiencing pain, the scope of an observer's reaction can range from concern for personal safety, including feelings of alarm, fear, and avoidance, to concern for the other person, including compassion, sympathy, and care-giving. The existence of the perception-action coupling mechanism apparent in emotional contagion also seems to account for our ability to perceive and understand the pain of others. In the case of pain, individuals are predisposed to find distress of others aversive and learn to avoid actions associated with this distress. This is even the case in many mammalian species, including rodents. For instance, rats that had learned to press a lever to obtain food would stop doing so if their response was paired with the delivery of an electric shock to a visible neighboring rat (6).

Recently, a handful of functional neuroimaging studies performed with healthy human volunteers revealed that the same neural circuits implicated in processing the affective and motivational aspects of pain in oneself account for the perception of pain in others (7). In one study, participants in a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanner either received a painful stimulus or, in other trials, observed a signal that their partner, who was present in the same room, would receive the same stimulus. First-hand experience of pain resulted in activation of the somatosensory cortex, which encodes the way we feel aspects of a noxious stimulus such as its bodily location and intensity. Furthermore, the anterior medial cingulate cortex (ACC), and the anterior insula were activated during both first-hand pain and the anticipated experience of pain in someone else. These regions are responsible for the affective and motivational processing of noxious stimuli such as those aspects of pain that pertain to desires, urges, or impulses to avoid or terminate a painful experience. A number of other neuroimaging studies of empathy for pain in adults as well as in children have demonstrated that the somatosensory cortex is not activated only during first-hand pain but is also activated with the perception of other people in pain. Altogether, there is strong evidence to suggest that perceiving the pain of others triggers an automatic somatic sensory-motor mirroring mechanism between other and self, which activates almost the entire neural pain matrix including the periaqueductal gray, a major site in pain transmission and for processing of fear and anxiety, and the supplementary motor area that programs defensive movements in response to anticipated pain. Such a neural resonance mechanism provides a functional bridge between first-person and third-person information. It is grounded in the equivalence of self and other, which allows for analogical reasoning, and offers a possible, yet partial, route to understanding others.

Of course, human empathic abilities are more sophisticated than simply yoking perceptions of the self and other. In the eighteenth century, Scottish philosopher and economist Adam Smith proposed that through imagination, “we place ourselves in his situation… enter as it were into his body, and become in some measure the same person with” (8). By means of imagination we come to experience sensations which are generally similar to, although typically weaker than, those of the other person. This capacity to engage in role-taking has been theoretically linked to the development of empathy, moral reasoning, and more generally, prosocial behavior. Unlike the motor mimicry and emotional contagion aspect of empathy, perspective-taking develops later, possibly because it draws heavily on the maturation of executive functions (i.e., processes that serve to monitor and control thought and actions, including self-regulation, planning, cognitive flexibility, response inhibition, and resistance to interference), functions that are predominantly centered in the prefrontal cortex which continues to mature from birth to adolescence. Theoretically, imagining the other is distinct from imagining the self: the former may evoke empathic concern (defined as an other-oriented response congruent with the perceived distress of the person in need) while the latter induces both empathic concern and personal distress (i.e., a self-oriented aversive emotional response such as anxiety or discomfort). This distinction has been supported empirically. When individuals are asked to imagine how they would feel in reaction to emotion-laden familiar situations and to imagine how a known person would feel if she was experiencing the same situations, common neural circuits are activated both for the self and the other. However, relative to imagining the self, imagining the other results in specific activation of parts of the frontal cortex that are implicated in executive control—the use of attention and working memory and decisions—and an area of the brain at the interface of the temporal and parietal lobes of the brain that is a key component of a larger network of neural circuits involved in attention (sometimes called the temporoparietal junction).

Some researchers have hypothesized that the role of the frontal lobes and the temporoparietal junction is to hold separate perspectives or to resist interference against attention to one’s own perspective. In a recent functional brain imaging study (9), participants were shown pictures of people with their hands or feet in painful or non-painful situations with the instruction to imagine themselves or to imagine another individual experiencing these situations. During perception of painful situations, both the self-perspective and the other-perspective were associated with activation in the neural network involved in pain processing. These results reveal the similarities in neural networks representing first- and third-person information. In addition, however, the self-perspective yielded higher pain ratings and involved more extensive activation of some circuits in the pain matrix than did the other-perspective, thus highlighting important differences between self- and other-perspectives.

Neuroanatomical regions and circuits form the foundation for the experience of pain in others, but they are not sufficient to explain variability in interpersonal sensitivity. Although empathetic brain circuits are activated by the mere perception of pain in others, activity in these circuits can be modulated by social, motivational, and cognitive factors. For example, observing pain in likable others (i.e., those who played a game fairly) resulted in an enhancement of empathic brain responses, whereas pain in dislikable others who played unfairly did not. Another functional MRI study (10) found that participants showed significantly greater responses in neural regions that are involved in pain perception when observing the pain of people who were not responsible for their stigmatized condition (i.e., individuals who contracted AIDS as the result of a blood transfusion) than either controls (healthy individuals) or people who were held responsible for their condition (i.e., those who contracted AIDS through illegal drug use). In addition, participants expressed more empathy and personal distress in response to the pain of people who were not responsible for their stigmatized condition as compared to controls. The level of empathic response, therefore, seems to be influenced by motivational factors as well as the interpersonal relationship between the target and the observer.

Altogether, these findings demonstrate that the similarities between affective representations of the self and the other stem from shared neural circuits that can be emulated either automatically or intentionally by the act of perspective-taking. Importantly, these findings also point to some distinctions between these two representations, distinctions that contribute to our capacity to detach ourselves from others sufficiently to make considered responses to their pain.

Conclusion

Empathy, the natural capacity to share, appreciate, and respond to the affective states of others, plays a crucial role in much of human social interaction from birth to the end of life. As would be expected if empathy functions to enhance social cohesion, social non-human primate species also exhibit rudimentary versions of empathy. What humans have in abundance are higher-level cognitive and social abilities (language, theory of mind, executive functions) that can be deployed to modulate empathic responses, and that are amenable to modulation by lower-level processes such as emotional contagion and mimicry. These levels of processing enable empathy to have an impact on a wide variety of human behaviors. From motivating prosocial behavior to providing the affective and motivational bases for moral development, empathy is an invisible force to reckon with when considering how humans behave toward each other.

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Seeing into My Mind and Other Minds

Empathy is defined by Jean Decety as "the natural capacity to share, appreciate, and respond to the affective states of others." Empathy rests on our ability to see into the mind of another while distinguishing it from one's own to be in a position to cooperate, coordinate, and provide the needed care for others. The possession of empathic capacity is not sufficient to determine the precise nature of the response toward others, however. As Decety points out, whether an individual attends to and responds empathically upon observing emotion in another individual depends on, among other things, dispositional tendencies, the relationship between the individuals, and contextual constraints. Motivation to help another is also influenced by the amount of cognitive effort we are willing and able to exert to take the perspective of the other.

Perspective-taking is essentially an attempt to see into the invisible mind of another. What we can't see, we model based on our own mind and like-minded individuals. Nick Epley shows that seeing into and connecting with other minds is such a frequent operation of the social brain that the absence of others inclines people to see human minds in nonhuman entities. Whether it's a tree, a pet, or God, ascribing mind to others endows them with the capacity to experience the same affective states we experience. This shared capacity evokes in us a tendency to feel and express empathic concern for their well-being. Unfortunately, humans do not grant all individuals, much less non-human entities, an equivalent degree of mind. Epley articulates how differences in the capacity to see mind in others have consequences for the way we feel and think about and behave toward others.

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tend
actually
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People
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Chapter 10[10]

Seeing Invisible Minds

Shortly after taking off from LaGuardia airport in the dead of winter, the engines of US Airways flight 1549 failed after inhaling several large geese. The pilots glided their plane onto the Hudson River, where all of the passengers were rescued, cold, wet, and almost completely unharmed. Explained one passenger, "God was certainly looking out for us." New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin offered a very different assessment of God's mind following the devastating impact of Hurricane Katrina when he explained that, "Surely God is mad at America. Surely he's not approving of us being in Iraq under false pretense. But surely he's upset at Black America, too."

Depending on your own beliefs, such statements will seem somewhere between insane and insightful. To psychologists, they seem impressive. They seem impressive not because they reveal a keen sense of causal inference, but rather because they reveal what may be the most impressive capacities of the social brain—the ability to reason about, or "to see," what other minds see. Introspection enables you to know your own intentions, report on your own thoughts, feel your own pain, and recognize when you are feeling shame rather than guilt. Other minds, however, are inherently invisible. You cannot know what it is like to be another person on the inside because your skull gets in the way.

The inherent invisibility of other minds poses a major problem for hard-nosed philosophers, who skeptically note that people cannot infer that other minds exist at all. Although it is surprisingly difficult for philosophers to reject the skeptical conclusion from the "other minds problem," almost everyone else casts it aside altogether some time around the age of five. At this point people have developed such a strong capacity to think about other minds that they not only see minds in other people, but they seem to see other minds almost everywhere[1]. Gods can be caring or callous. Pets can be thoughtful or devious. And every now and then, computers can have a mind of their own.

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[10] The lead author is Nicholas Epley, Ph.D., a Professor of Behavioral Science at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. His research investigates people's ability to reason about others' minds, from knowing how one is being judged by others to predicting others' attitudes, beliefs, and underlying motivations, and the implications of systematic mistakes in mind reading for everyday social interactions. His research has appeared in more than two dozen journals, has been featured by the *Wall Street Journal*, CNN, *Wired*, and National Public Radio, among many others, and has been funded by the National Science Foundation and the Templeton Foundation. Epley has written for the *New York Times*, produced lectures for the *Financial Times*, been elected as a Fellow of the Association for Psychological Science, and is the winner of the 2008 Theoretical Innovation Prize from the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.

Other minds are inherently invisible. You cannot see an attitude, smell a belief, or touch an intention, and yet you can nevertheless "see" these mental states in other people with great ease. You can even see them in agents ranging from pets to gadgets to gods. How you are able to see other minds, and how they become visible, matters because it marks the difference between treating others as human beings worthy of moral care and concern versus treating others as objects or animals.

Having the capacity to reason about other minds enables people to form deep social connections with others, to empathize with others' pain and share in their joy, and to anticipate others' actions. But having a capacity and actually using it are two different things. People are not naturally inclined to see invisible things in the environment. People do not automatically see into other minds, either, but instead do so only under certain circumstances and with some psychological effort. This chapter will describe how people come to see other minds, how other minds can become more or less visible, and why the visibility of other minds matters for everyday life.

Kinds of Minds

Studying how people understand other minds first requires understanding how people intuitively define another mind. Research suggests that people think of minds as having two distinct dimensions, the ability to act (agency) and the ability to feel (experience)[2]. Mindful agency involves the cognitive activities that enable action, such as the capacity to plan, to have intentions, to engage in deliberate self-control, and to pursue one's own goals. Conscious preferences, attitudes, and beliefs follow from these capacities. Mindful experience, in contrast, involves the cognitive activities involved in reacting to the external world, such as the capacity for self-awareness, and the experience of basic psychological states (like hunger, thirst, or pain), and other-oriented emotions (such as empathy or sympathy). Mindful experience also involves the capacity for metacognition—the capacity to think about one's own thoughts or emotions—exemplified in experiences such as confidence and doubt, or in secondary emotions such as shame, guilt, joy, or hope. People seem to represent these two capacities in others quite independently. A sociopath, for instance, can appear to act with a high degree of mindful agency but no mindful experience, whereas a baby might appear full of mindful experience with relatively little mindful agency. Seeing other agents as mindful essentially means seeing them as able to consciously think and/or to feel. Because you are aware of both your own thoughts *and* feelings, you likely consider yourself—like most people do—to be very mindful.

Making Other Minds Visible

Introspection provides a kind of flashlight that seems to provide direct access to one's own agency as well as experience. Although research demonstrates that introspection is actually a process of indirect inference, it *appears* to us that introspection provides direct access to the workings of our own brain. It seems that we can look on the inside and *feel* when we are suffering, *know* when we are experiencing regret, or be *aware* of our intentions to lose weight. We can use our introspective abilities to make inferences about what others are likely thinking or feeling (and we very often do), but such inferences are likely to seem inherently less direct, less immediate, and less illuminating. We cannot see into other minds as clearly as we seem able to see our own.

When something is difficult to see, people may doubt whether it actually exists, or may not see it at all. This is true of the relative difficulty that people have seeing other minds compared to one's own, in ways that are sometimes very subtle and surprising. For instance, we tend to evaluate ourselves by consulting our mindful intentions, but we evaluate others (and *their* intentions) by observing their actions. We may consider ourselves to be conscientious if we planned to buy our spouse a birthday gift, but need to see an *actual* gift to infer that our spouse is equally conscientious.[3] We tend to believe that we are more likely to experience complicated mental emotions like shame, guilt, or embarrassment than are others.[4,5] We tend to believe that our own behavior will therefore be guided by moral sentiments like empathy, guilt, or compassion whereas others' behavior is more likely driven by the relatively mindless motives of self-interest.[6] Other minds are more opaque than our own, and some learning, attending, seeking, and projecting is required for our brains to become fully social and see into them. Here's how[7].

Learning. Children do not enter the world able to think about other minds, but they learn to do so fairly quickly. At around three months of age, children start preferentially attending to animate objects compared to inanimate objects, and at around six months of age start to distinguish between intentional (goal-directed) and unintentional (accidental) action. At this age, for instance, children will look reliably longer at a person who is reaching for a cup than to a person who is making the same reaching motion in the absence of a cup. Over the next 18 months, children become more likely to mimic intentional than unintentional actions[8], to follow the gaze of another person and therefore share his or her attentional focus, and recognize that other people may have preferences that differ from one's own. By age two, children's social ability to read other minds seems to have already surpassed that of our nearest primate relatives, and over the next two years they pick up what appear to be uniquely human mind-reading capacities. By age five, children demonstrate the most sophisticated of mind-reading abilities—the capacity to recognize that others' beliefs may differ from one's own and to use those differing (sometimes *mistaken*) beliefs to predict the other agent's behavior. Variability from age five onward comes from learning more specific details about how other minds actually work, largely gathered from personal experience, religious practice, or broader cultural norms.

Many psychologists and neuroscientists speculate that learning to read other minds comes from the deeply social tendency, present at birth, to mimic others' actions. For example, Steve Small examines a neurological underpinning for mimicry, and Jean Decety argues in his essay that an inborn capacity for mimicry underlies the human capacity for empathy. Looking where others look and copying their actions is a reasonable way to copy their likely mental states as well. This egocentric method of using one's own mental experience as a guide to other minds continues to be employed throughout adulthood, and can give insight into others' mental states but can also lead people to overestimate the extent to which others' minds are similar to one's own. These biases tend to be called egocentric when reasoning about other people, and they tend to be called anthropomorphic when reasoning about nonpeople such as a god or a gadget or a pet.

Attending. People rarely notice things in their environment unless they are specifically attending to them. Other minds likewise tend to be relatively invisible unless attention is specifically drawn to them. For instance, take a moment to think about how happy you are compared to the average American… No really, please take a moment…If you just spent some time thinking about how happy you are and no time thinking about how happy the average American is, then you are no different from the majority of people in psychology experiments who do likewise[8]. People can consider others' thoughts, feelings, beliefs, or emotions, but doing so requires mental effort that is in short and limited supply. Consider, for instance, a simple experiment in which you are playing a game with another person[9]. Both you and the other player in this game must first choose privately to cooperate or compete with each other. If you both choose to cooperate, you both earn $5. But if the other player chooses to cooperate and you choose to compete, then you win $10 and your partner gets nothing. If you, however, choose to cooperate and the other player chooses to compete, you win nothing and your partner wins $10. If you both choose to compete, you both win a measly $2. It seems obvious in this situation that you should consider both what you would like to do, but also consider what the other player is likely to be thinking. Experimental evidence suggests that people do indeed think about the former but spend little time thinking of the latter. In a basic version of this experiment, 60% of people chose to cooperate. However, when people were simply asked to think about their partner's thoughts before making their choice, only 27% chose to cooperate. If people had already been thinking about others' thoughts, as it seems like they would naturally be doing in this situation, then a simple instruction to consider others' thoughts would have no effect on people's own behavior. That is not the case. This simple experiment shows that people may not naturally consider other minds even when it appears that they should. Thinking about other minds requires attentional effort. It does not necessarily come automatically. Indeed, as Tanya Luhrmann describes in her chapter, people may have to work very hard to discern other minds, such as the mind of God, even when they are actively looking for them.

Seeking. If seeing other minds requires attention, then other minds are especially likely to become visible when people are motivated to think about them. There are many reasons why people might try to get into the mind of another agent, from a spouse to a pet to a god, but two are reasonably well-supported by existing research. First, people tend to think about other minds when they are trying to form a social connection with others.[10] Making people feel lonely or isolated, for instance, increases the tendency to describe one's pet as thoughtful, considerate, or sympathetic (all mindful traits). And those who are made to feel lonely are also likely to report believing in mindful supernatural agents, such as God. Second, people tend to think about other minds when they are trying to achieve some understanding and control over their environment or over another agent's behavior.[1] Concepts of mind, including attitudes, beliefs, goals, or desires, can provide compelling cause-

and-effect explanations of behavior that give a sense of predictability and control. A meteorologist may know that a hurricane may strike *here* or *there* depending on environmental conditions. Lacking such knowledge, a hurricane that strikes here rather than there may lead people to invoke a mindful agent—such as a God—to explain that action.

Projecting. If introspection makes your own mind visible, then you might assume that those who look similar to you on the outside might look similar to you on the inside as well. Indeed, animals that move at a humanlike speed (such as a horse) seem more mindful to people than do animals that move either much slower (such as a sloth) or much faster (such as a hummingbird).[11] And an agent that look humanlike, such as a computerized avatar with human face, seems more mindful than avatars that do not look humanlike. Any parent knows how well toy makers love to capitalize on this tendency. But it is the converse of this effect that is even more interesting—other minds become less visible as the agent becomes less similar to the self. Others that differ from you in their interests, nationality, or social status are likely to be seen as less mindful—less thoughtful, less likely to experience complicated emotions, less able to experience pain or suffering—than those that are similar to you. It is little wonder, then, that the history of human conflict is filled with instances of people dehumanizing radically different others, treating them like mindless animals or objects.[12]

Why Minds Matter

It may not be obvious to you why it matters that your neighbor, every now and then, thinks that her computer has a mind of it's own, that a mayor believes that God punished his city by sending a hurricane, or that you truly believe that your pet poodle is thoughtful and considerate. Some of these attributions of mind seem purely metaphorical and therefore unimportant, as ways of speaking rather than ways of believing, whereas others seem to represent genuine beliefs about the real presence or absence of another social mind. But metaphors have a way of influencing behavior in ways that are consistent with believing the metaphor to be literally true. People metaphorically refer to feeling dirty after behaving unethically, and yet washing one's hands actually reduces the guilt that people report feeling from engaging in unethical actions.[13] People are surely just speaking metaphorically when they refer to rejection as being given the cold shoulder, and yet research demonstrates that people do indeed report feeling that a room is colder after someone has just rejected them than after someone has just accepted them.[14] And surely people are only speaking metaphorically when they refer to the stock market as anxious or jittery, and yet describing the market as mindful leads stock traders to believe that trends are likely to continue whereas describing the market as mindless leads traders to predict more random variability.[15] Whether metaphorical or literal, seeing other agents as mindful matters because people tend to treat the agent as if it has a mind. That matters for at least three major reasons.

First, mindful agents have both intentions and the capacity for self-control. Mindful agents can therefore be held responsible for their actions. Possessing a guilty mind (*mens rea)* is necessary for being held criminally responsible for a crime in the US, a precedent found in courts around the world dating back to the Middle Ages. In times past and cultures in which people did not so naturally restrict intentional capacities to other humans, animals (such as rats) and objects (such as "possessed" statues) were common targets of criminal prosecution[16,17]. Increasing the extent to which other agents seem mindful also increases the praise or blame that they receive for their actions. And even diminishing the extent to which people feel in mindful control of their own behavior (e.g., by undermining people's belief in free will), leads people to behave in ways that are consistent with diminished self-control (such as by cheating on an exam when tempted to do so).[18]

Second, other minds are capable of thinking, and may therefore be thinking about *you*. Being under scrutiny by mindful agents has two basic effects on human behavior. One is that mindful agents become sources of social influence, increasing the extent to which people behave in socially desirable ways[20]. Imagine, for instance, how you might behave if you found a magic ring that made you invisible… and you'll get the point. This ability for mindful surveillance to control behavior has been proposed as one of the reasons, if not the primary reason, why religious systems that posit an omnipresent deity are able to maintain such large-scale cooperative societies. The other effect of mindful surveillance is that it is mentally taxing to monitor others' thoughts. This effortful monitoring can diminish a person's performance on other cognitively demanding tasks[21]. And while waiting for a stressful event, such as giving a speech, people show less stress-related responses when in the presence of their relatively mindless pet than when in the presence of their relatively more mindful spouse[22].

Finally, other minds matter because mindful agents become moral agents worthy of care and compassion[7]. The principle of autonomy captures this most basic of human rights—that because all people have the same minimal capacity to suffer, deliberate, and choose, no person can compromise the body, life, or freedom of another person. Agents with mindful experience, the capacity to suffer, deliberate, and choose, become those that evoke empathy and concern for well being, whereas agents without mindful experience can be treated simply as mindless objects. From debates about abortion to animal rights to euthanasia, the mindful experience of the agents in question is often either the explicit or implicit focus of debate. Making invisible minds visible, and hence more like one's own, enables people to more readily follow the most famous of all ethical dictates—to treat others as you would have others treat you.

Conclusion

It is impossible for scientists to examine whether God was looking out for the passengers of flight 1549 or punishing the residents of New Orleans with Hurricane Katrina, but it is very possible to examine why people might make such inferences. These examinations have revealed a remarkable capacity to look beyond the visible behavior that the environment provides to reason about a completely invisible world of intentions and goals, of motives and beliefs, of attitudes and preferences—an invisible world of other minds. Understanding when people are likely to recognize other minds (and see into them) and when they are not is the key to understanding when people may be likely to invoke natural versus supernatural explanations, when gadgets can seem to have minds of their own, and when people are likely to treat their pets as people and their enemies as animals. A mind like our own, with the capacity to see into other minds, is essential for an agent to be, as we are, fundamentally social.

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Inferring Minds Where None Can Be Seen

The social brain seeks connections with others. But what is the foundation that we use to build such connections? We experience empathy as a form of emotional resonance and understanding of other people. This connection allows us to comfort and support and celebrate with others. Being in tune with emotional states of others allows us to respond in ways that strengthen a group. But how do we understand the thoughts and goals of others? How do we predict choices and decisions to facilitate cooperation in groups? Anthropomorphism is the basis for predicting behavior and thoughts and goals. Nick Epley discusses how anthropomorphism is rooted in an egocentric view of others. Moreover our view of others is not confined to the others that are people. It is perhaps reflective of the deep and fundamental nature of anthropomorphism in the social brain that its anthropomorphic inferences about agents can be derived from observed behavior, allowing us to understand "minds" where none may exist, as in mechanical toys or alarm clocks. Of course we tend to understand those minds by thinking they are just like us.

Even when there is no agent to be seen, events in the world may be understood by attributing them to unseen agents. During World War II, the bombing of London was demonstrably random, but citizens of London could not help but discern intentional patterns in the attacks. As Epley points out, hurricanes and floods are even today attributed to the hand of God, perhaps an angry God. Clark Gilpin discusses how religions may use this aspect of the social brain to achieve an understanding of God and what God wants. This kind of anthropomorphism can be taken to different metaphoric extremes in personifying God as father or friend. But an overly concrete personification may have costs perhaps diminishing the universality and pervasiveness of God in other religions. Thus religions may differ in theological perspective on the value of the anthropomorphic impulse inherent in the social brain.

human
anthropomorphism
nonhuman
social
order
God
religious
Edwards
world
modern
perception
natural
humans
society
one
hell
faithfulness
connection
sermon
divine
psychological
environment
fire
universe
nature
wrath
creation
spiritual
understanding
science
Sinners
Angry
Hands
inference
history
willingly
cosmic
mind
whole
phenomena
communicative
person
like
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harmonious
connections
God's
purpose
town
sense
assumptions
behavior
identity
century
earth
Williams
capacity
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emotions
heart
terms
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men
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agency
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aristocratic
structure
another
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interpretations
maintain
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life
events
case
mechanisms
historical

Chapter 11[11]

Anthropomorphism: Human Connection to a Universal Society

When Jonathan Edwards, an angular New England minister in his late thirties, mounted the narrow steps into the pulpit on July 8, 1741, the sermon he was about to preach would become one of the most famously electrifying orations in American history, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." Edwards preached this sermon during the massive transatlantic religious revival that gave rise to Methodism in England and came to be known in the American colonies as "the Great Awakening." This was not the familiar pulpit of his congregation in Northampton, Massachusetts, but rather the church at Enfield, a town that had gained notoriety for stubbornly resisting the exhortations of previous preachers of spiritual awakening. From his scriptural text—"their foot shall slide in due time" (Deut. 32: 35)—Edwards drew the doctrine that "there is nothing that keeps wicked men, at any one moment, out of hell, but the mere pleasure of God." Sinners living here and now, Edwards declared, were "the objects of that very same anger and wrath of God, that is expressed in the torments of hell," and that wrath was an annihilating fire that already "burns against them; their damnation does not slumber; the pit is prepared; the fire is made ready…to receive them." In a notorious image, Edwards portrayed God dangling the sinner's soul over the fires of hell like a spider on a single, slender filament of its web. The sermon achieved stunning results, as recorded in the diary of one of those present, Stephen Williams: "before the sermon was done, there was a great moaning and crying out throughout the whole house—what shall I do to be saved; oh, I am going to hell; oh, what shall I do for a Christ." The "shrieks and cries were piercing and amazing," Williams reported, and the scene was so tumultuous that Edwards had to stop before finishing his sermon.[i]

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[11] The lead author, Clark Gilpin, Ph.D., is the Margaret E. Burton Professor of the History of Christianity at the University of Chicago Divinity School. Clark studies the cultural history of theology in England and America from the seventeenth century to the present. From 1990 to 2000, he served as dean of the Divinity School, and from 2000 to 2004 he directed the Martin Marty Center, the Divinity School's institute for advanced research in all fields of the academic study of religion. His current research projects include a book with the working title *Alone with the Alone: Solitude in American Religious and Literary History*, which explores ways in which the spiritual discipline of solitary writing—autobiographic narratives, journals, and letters—shaped the careers of major New England intellectuals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Anthropomorphic representations of God make many modern people very nervous, including many religious people. Attributing human-like ideas and emotions to the comprehending powers of the universe not only seems out of step with modern science but also a presumptuous confinement of the world within merely human needs and capacities. Yet, the impulse to speak anthropomorphically about our "ultimate environment" has vigorously persisted into the modern age. Rather than dismissing anthropomorphism as an outmoded way of thinking, this essay adopts a historical approach to rethink why anthropomorphism exhibits this perennial capacity to focus the human ethical imagination on our relations with and obligations to the universe within which we live.

As the classic American example of fire-and-brimstone Protestant preaching, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" depends, for its effect, on *anthropomorphism*: ascribing human form and attributes—hands, emotions, and purposive agency—to nonhuman phenomena. Anthropomorphism has been a hotly debated feature of religion since classical antiquity. But, in the modern world, religious anthropomorphism has become especially controversial, while, at the same time, also becoming a crucial concept in modern theories about the very nature of religion.[ii] Modern objections to anthropomorphism have taken two major forms. First, traditions within Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have long opposed the worship of "idols," and regarded anthropomorphism as a dangerous assault against genuine piety and properly theological understanding of existence. In the modern period these religious objections against anthropomorphism have eventuated not only in sophisticated intellectual polemics against anthropomorphic concepts of God but also in popular movements of iconoclasm, which protested against anthropomorphic representations of the divine and sometimes physically destroyed anthropomorphic images. Second, the rise and development of modern science has emphasized the regularity of the processes that structure the natural world. And even when these orderly processes were described as natural "laws"—a term with obvious anthropomorphic connotations—they have generally been understood in ways that are thoroughly impersonal and lacking any intrinsic purpose or design. Hence, modern science has generated numerous questions about religious interpretations of influence on the course of nature by divine ideas and purposes. Since the late nineteenth century, many instances of the so-called "warfare" between science and theology have turned on the issue of whether any scientific plausibility could be attached to concepts of a divine mind, purpose, or intention that guided or ordered the structure of the universe.[iii] According to the philosopher Charles Taylor, the transition from perceptions of a divinely ordered, purposive universe to an "impersonal order" of nature marked a pivotal change that, especially since the eighteenth century, has shaped "a secular age" among the societies of the modern West.[iv] In short, anthropomorphism has not only become a source of tension within religions but also something of an impasse between religious and scientific interpretations of the universe. Nonetheless, anthropomorphic assumptions remain vigorously present in many of the modern forms of theology, spiritual practice, and religious art, a persistence that suggests the strength of the psychological and social functions performed by anthropomorphic representation.

In light of these longstanding controversies about religious anthropomorphism, the graphically anthropomorphic, spider-dangling deity of Edwards's sermon would seem to offer a good test case for understanding how anthropomorphic religious language works in the modern era. Such an understanding begins with one of the central themes of this book, namely, the powerful human motivation to establish and maintain social connections. Anthropomorphism extends this drive for social connection beyond the boundaries of human societies by attributing human characteristics to nonhuman phenomena. In this way, anthropomorphic language incorporates human society in a web of ethical obligations that connect to the natural environment and, by imaginative extension, to the universe as a whole. Although the drive toward social connection is a general human trait, however, persons neither seek nor find satisfaction in a generalized sense of connection. Instead, satisfying social connections are sought and experienced in terms of the social norms and values of particular historical and cultural settings. Likewise, anthropomorphism, as an inferred social connection to the nonhuman, takes shape and becomes persuasive in terms of historically and culturally specific assumptions about society and social relations. This chapter will, therefore, step back from "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," in order to describe how contemporary scholarship in social neuroscience and in the history of religions provides a fresh point of view on the workings of anthropomorphic perception and then test that interpretive model by reappraising Edwards's famous sermon in its historical context.

The Boundary of the Human

The line between the human and the nonhuman is, perhaps, the most consequential presupposition that any society, group, or individual adopts about life in the world. The way various cultures draw this line, between "us" and "the other," has shaped civilizations and their goals as well as the norms of personal conduct and identity. Although concepts of the human have a long and contentious philosophical history, people in their everyday lives show remarkable consensus in the features they use to define "human." Central to this process of perceiving the human is a perception of mind in other agents, including the presence of goal-directed agency, emotions such as anger, guilt, or pride, a capacity for self-awareness, and free will. As Nick Epley demonstrated in the preceding chapter, the perception of these distinctively human traits—"seeing invisible minds"—is a psychological mechanism with tremendous influence on the way humans order and understand their social environment.

Mind perception is such a powerful tool of inductive inference, however, that it regularly crosses the line it has itself drawn between the human and the nonhuman. Scholars from a wide array of disciplines have long observed humans' anthropomorphic tendency to see nonhuman things or events as humanlike, imbuing the real or imagined behavior of nonhuman phenomena with human motivations, agency, and emotions. By perceiving the world in terms of human capacities and social relationships, anthropomorphism builds a complex system of analogies that uses knowledge of what it is like to be a person, in order to interpret the behavior of animals, the function of technological devices, the operation of complex social systems such as "the market," or natural occurrences such as violent weather patterns or catastrophic events.[v] Hence, anthropomorphism, as a process of inference that not only draws but also crosses the line between the human and the nonhuman, has very substantial consequences for the human sense of connection to nonhuman animals, to larger ecological systems, and to the structure of the universe taken as a whole.

Contemporary psychological research has created an intellectual space that opens the phenomenon of anthropomorphism to fresh possibilities for interpretation that are especially important for understanding its role in the human spiritual traditions in modernity, as well as the controversies surrounding that role. This research proposes that a single set of psychological mechanisms is likely to explain when people perceive a mind at work in an encountered phenomenon, regardless of whether the thing in question is a god, a machine, an animal, another person, or an uncanny sequence of events. From this perspective, the psychological process of anthropomorphic inference works in concert with two other motivational mechanisms: the need to interact effectively with nonhuman phenomena in our environment and the desire to establish social connections with other humans.[vi] The phrase *anthropomorphic inference* fails to capture, however, the interactive dynamism that infuses a person's perception that a mind is at work in another agent. Put more strongly, our sense that mind is present in the other is, in no small measure, the sense that we are *communicating*. The absence of this communicative dimension of mind perception is precisely the tragedy in the family of an Alzheimer's patient—the loss of reciprocal recognition. As Tanya Luhrmann vividly illustrates in the next chapter, religious anthropomorphism builds on the notion that this communicative reciprocity extends beyond the boundary of human society into the wider environment and includes social connection and communication with the divine.

Anthropomorphism adds an obvious but important twist to these psychological mechanisms: whenever a person ascribes human attributes to a nonhuman phenomenon, the person nonetheless continues to perceive it as nonhuman. When, for instance, a pet owner observes a dog's reliability and infers that this behavior arises from the dog's faithfulness, the owner does not go on to say that the dog *is* human. Indeed, an indispensable aspect of an anthropomorphic way of seeing Fido's faithfulness is that the person also continues to see Fido as a dog. This dual perception is even more pronounced in a parallel illustration: a person observes the everyday reliability of gravity and infers that this arises from faithfulness at the heart of the natural order. Both illustrations indicate a close connection of anthropomorphism to metaphor, in which persons understand one kind of thing in terms of another by identifying a feature that bridges their difference without eliminating it. The specific feature, in this case *faithfulness*, posits a point of comparison that enables a familiar human capacity for loyalty to enable interpretation of another, unfamiliar or alien phenomenon. The illustrations further suggest that Fido's faithfulness is what could be called *weak* anthropomorphism, because one could plausibly argue that dogs and humans actually do share a capacity for faithfulness. We perceive that, as mammals, they exhibit many behavioral similarities. By contrast, the perception of faithfulness as an attribute of the natural order is *strong* anthropomorphism, because it makes a far more daring inference in its effort to draw an analogy that produces insight or knowledge about the communicative reciprocity of the human and the nonhuman. Religions, as Edwards's sermon illustrates, build primarily on strong anthropomorphism in order to propound communicative social connection with the nonhuman world. The metaphorical and analogical reasoning so characteristic of religious interpretations of the world is not merely a rhetorical flourish but is, instead, closely tied to general psychological processes in which self-knowledge and knowledge of other humans function as the most readily accessible starting points for inferences we make about human connections to the most comprehensive and consequential forces at work in the nonhuman world.[vii]

Anthropomorphism's dual perception of nonhuman phenomena—as simultaneously both like and unlike human persons—has shaped modern religious and spiritual perceptions in two especially intriguing directions. In one case, it has fastened on the *difference* between the human and the divine and cultivated iconoclastic perceptions of the spiritual in which anthropomorphic representation is regarded as a dangerously misleading, albeit necessary, accommodation to the limitations of human reason.[viii] In the other case, it has emphasized the point of metaphorical *identity* between the human and the nonhuman. Thus, an ancient idea held that the physical universe was a macrocosm mirroring the human microcosm, and this included what literary critics have named "the pathetic fallacy," that is, a sympathetic response in nature to the affective states of humans. The early modern political philosopher Hugo Grotius (1583-1645), for example, described how human disobedience to divine law prompted an anthropomorphic emotional response from nature: "with sad motion wheeling, let the sky lament and mourn."[ix] In the modern history of religions, these two modes of anthropomorphism, one accentuating difference and the other accentuating identity, have varied according to social circumstance, rhetorical purpose, and political ramifications. "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" illustrates, in one historical context, how anthropomorphic language crosses the boundary of the human in order to interpret human ethical responsibility to both the human and the nonhuman environment.

The Rhetoric of Divine Wrath

Clearly, Edwards's anthropomorphic rhetoric destabilized in a terrifying way the Enfield congregation's complacent perceptions of the world. It did so by starting from an assumption that Edwards and the congregation shared: that humanity's ultimate environment should be construed, anthropomorphically, as a cosmic society held together by a covenant that God had made with the whole of creation. The sermon induced terror among the congregants by graphically portraying their own responsibility for disrupting the harmonious order of this all-encompassing society and provoking divine wrath for their rebellion against the covenant.

The primary evidence for this divine wrath came not, however, from the external orders of nature and divine providence, which Edwards imagined working together to maintain the harmonious order of the world. Instead, wrath had arisen from a clash between the benign will of the world and the rebellious human will: "there is laid in the very nature of carnal men a foundation for the torments of hell: there are those corrupt principles, in reigning power in them, and in full possession of them, that are seeds of hell fire." For the present God restrained human wickedness "by his mighty power, as he does the raging waves of the troubled sea," but, if God should withdraw that restraining power, humanity's willful self-regard would overturn nature. The most dangerous fire in creation was not, therefore, the fire of hell but rather the hellfire bursting forth from an unrestrained human will: "The corruption of the heart of man is a thing that is immoderate and boundless in its fury; and while wicked men live here, it is like fire pent up by God's restraints," but, should God ever relax his governance, humanity's boundless fury "would set on fire the course of nature."

The turmoil stirred by human willfulness, like a violent storm at sea, threatened to capsize the ark of the universe, and the earth responded to this threat in a terrifying version of the pathetic fallacy, in which not empathy but enmity arose between humans and their natural environment. Consequently, except for "the sovereign pleasure of God, the earth would not bear you one moment," and Edwards warned the Enfield congregation that "the creation groans with you" and resented its subservience to human usurpation: "the sun don't willingly shine upon you to give you light to serve sin and Satan; the earth don't willingly yield her increase to satisfy your lusts; nor is it willingly a stage for your wickedness to be acted upon; the air don't willingly serve you for breath to maintain the flame of life in your vitals, while you spend your life in the service of God's enemies. God's creatures are good, and were made for men to serve God with, and do not willingly subserve to any other purpose, and groan when they are abused to purposes so directly contrary to their nature and end." A rebellious humanity antagonized the rest of creation, "and the world would spew you out, were it not for the sovereign hand of him who hath subjected it in hope."

The just order of the cosmos would rightly destroy humanity for its willful rebellion against the order of the whole, and the fact that this had not already happened was the expression of something like the self-restraining mercy of a monarch who does not order the execution of a traitor who has offended the royal honor: "The bow of God's wrath is bent, and the arrow made ready on the string, and Justice bends the arrow at your heart, and strains the bow, and it is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, without any promise or obligation at all, that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood."

The Great Awakening was coterminous and interactive with the eighteenth century development of the modern physical sciences, especially building on the work of Isaac Newton (1642-1727). Edwards's assumptions about the harmonious order of creation combined the science of his day with the aristocratic social order of eighteenth-century society. In warning the town of Enfield that it had transgressed the cosmic order, Williams was also asserting that it had violated the societal aspect of that order; as minister, he called the town to task for both violations.

Conclusion

Edwards imagined the Newtonian universe as an aristocratic social hierarchy held in harmony by sovereign law, at once moral and natural.

In this hierarchy one member—the human—had stepped beyond its assigned place in the cosmic society and now lived in an unwitting complacency, ignoring the precarious finitude of a life being pursued by a radical judgment: "'tis nothing but [God's] hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment: 'tis to be ascribed to nothing else, that you did not go to hell the last night; that you was suffered to awake again in this world, after you closed your eyes to sleep: And there is no other reason to be given, why you have not dropped into hell since you arose in the morning, but that God's hand has held you up."

Like his contemporaries, the deists and religiously inclined scientists such as Newton himself, Jonathan Edwards assumed the "Newtonian world machine," operating with the metronomic regularity of natural law. Presupposing both the science and the aristocratic social hierarchy of his day, Edward introduced anthropomorphic language to create a clash between this harmonious order and the willful self-interest of humans who dared to ignore their proper rung on the ladder of existence. As a preacher of penitence, he carried his anthropomorphic imagery to extravagant heights in order to induce a reversal of behavior in a recalcitrant town. The sermon effectively threatened the people of Enfield with what amounted to "metaphysical ostracism," an expulsion no less thoroughgoing than the primordial ejection of Adam and Eve from the garden. The palpable effect of this imagery depended on the evocation of the natural and social orders rising up like, and yet unlike, an angry monarch to crush rebels against the cosmic commonwealth.

References

[1] In the interests of clarity, I have slightly rearranged and modernized this quotation. It and all quotations from Edwards's sermon are taken from Jonathan Edwards, *Sermons and Discourses, 1739-1742*, ed. Harry S. Stout and Nathan O. Hatch, with Kyle P. Farley, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* 22 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 404-18.

[1] Social scientific analysis of the relation between anthropomorphism and religion is summarized by Steward Elliot Guthrie, who argues "religion *is* anthropomorphism" in his book *Faces in the Clouds: A New Theory of Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 178. The most lucid and succinct historical treatment remains Frank E. Manuel, *The Eighteenth Century Confronts the Gods* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959).

[1] I have in mind such authors as John William Draper, *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science* (1874), and Andrew Dickson White, *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom* (1896). For a more recent example, see Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2008).

[1] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 270-95.

[1] For a sampling of relevant recent work, see Philip Husbands, Owen Holland, and Michael Wheeler, eds., *The Mechanical Mind in History* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2008); and Lorraine Daston and Gregg Mitman, eds., *Thinking with Animals: New Perspectives on Anthropomorphism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005). Ralph Waldo Emerson made the classic American argument for the positive reciprocity between the human and the natural. This idea of mutuality takes a different turn in our contemporary situation, in which industrial and technological

advances have begun to alter the climate and thereby blurred the boundary between the human and the natural in another way. See for examples of this phenomenon, Bill McKibben, *The End of Nature* (New York: Random House, 1989).

[1] Nicholas Epley, Adam Waytz, and John Cacioppo, "On Seeing Human: A Three-Factor Theory of Anthropomorphism," *Psychological Review* 114 (2007): 864-86.

[1] Sheldon Sacks, ed., *On Metaphor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978); David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (New York: Crossroad, 1981).

[1] Alain Besançon, *The Forbidden Image: An Intellectual History of Iconoclasm*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000); Joseph Leo Korner, *The Reformation of the Image* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

[1] Merritt Y. Hughes, "Earth Felt the Wound," *English Literary History* 36 (1969): 193-214.

Personifications of God

Jonathan Edwards wrote during a time in which monarchs reigned supreme. Writing from this perspective, he argued that the universe is a cosmic society organized under the leadership of a King of kings, a society against which humans have rebelled and, as a consequence, humans are at risk of annihilation except for the mercy of the King. Judgment day will come, according to Edwards, and those who have failed to meet their moral responsibility to the directive of the universe face eternal isolation. Clark Gilpin notes that by conjuring up a personified God – a God with emotions, intentions, and the capacity to act – Edwards instilled great fear and trembling in his listeners that presumably motivated them to change their behaviors in the desired direction. It is hard to imagine that Edwards would have had comparable success had he resorted to simple instructions or exhortations to engage in certain behaviors and avoid others. The innate tendency of people to understand divine entities in terms of what people do understand, namely their own thoughts, feelings, and beliefs, provided the leverage on which Edwards relied to drive his message home.

Tanya Luhrmann also discusses a personalized construction of God – a God with whom one can consult and who intervenes in one's daily life. People are intrinsically motivated to form social connections, and very little in life is more rewarding to people than their social relationships. Luhrmann, who adopts the perspective of a participant observer, finds that a new evangelical Protestant movement, the Vineyard Church, appeals to this motivation to depict God as one's personal guide and friend, well within one's sensory reach. By conjuring up an anthropomorphic God with loving emotions, intentions, and actions, the Vineyard Church creates a desire for a personal relationship with God. But developing a relationship with an invisible God defies rationality. People must learn how to transform an abstract concept of an invisible God into a concrete sensory presence in their lives. Just as the social brain can perceive nonhuman objects as human, the social brain is also capable of selectively attending to sensory experiences and interpreting these sensations as God's presence.

Chapter 12[12]

How Does God Become Real

How does God become real to people when God is understood to be invisible and immaterial, as God is within the Christian tradition? This is not the question of whether God is real, but rather how people learn to make the judgment that God is present. Such a God is not accessible to the senses. When you talk to that God, you can neither see his face nor hear his voice. You cannot touch him. How can you be confident that he is there?

Anthropology cannot answer the question of whether God is real. But the traditional method of the discipline, participant observation, can use the slow, careful method of fieldwork to explore the way that people learn to experience God as present in their lives. And what the method can teach us is that this often intensely private and personal relationship between a creature and its creator is built through a profoundly social process.

In fact, one of anthropology's most useful contributions to understanding the experience of God is to draw attention to just how much work faith takes, and to the fact that different kinds of faith—and different understandings of God—demand different kinds of work. Many who do not believe in God approach the question of religious belief as the problem of why people should believe in the existence of an invisible, intentional agent in their world. One of the more persuasive recent answers emerges from the observation that many of our cognitive traits evolved to help us survive. Evolutionary anthropologists and psychologists argue that belief in invisible beings is an accidental byproduct of the way our minds have evolved over the millennia. Our quick, effortless, automatic intuitions lead us to "anthropomorphize," or to see faces in the clouds, as one scholar puts it. From this perspective, people believe in God because it is so easy to believe in invisible supernatural presence, and the great religions are elaborations around this basic core. [1]

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[12] The lead author is Tanya Luhrmann, Ph.D., a professor in the Stanford Anthropology Department. Her interests include the social shaping of psychological experience, and the way that social practice may affect even the most concrete ways in which people experience their world, particularly in the domain of what some would call the "irrational". Her first project was a detailed study of the way apparently reasonable people come to believe apparently unreasonable beliefs ("Persuasions of the Witch's Craft", Harvard, 1989). Her second project explored the apparently irrational self-criticism of a postcolonial India elite, the result of colonial identification with the colonizers ("The Good Parsi", Harvard 1996). Her third book identified two cultures within the American profession of psychiatry and examined the way these different cultures encouraged two different forms of empathy and two different understandings of mental illness ("Of Two Minds", Knopf, 2000). She trained at the University of Cambridge (PhD 1986), and taught for many years at the University of California San Diego. Prior to moving to Stanford she was the Max Palevsky Professor and a director of the Clinical Ethnography project in the Department of Comparative Human Development at the University of Chicago.

Religion is often understood as a matter of belief: a yes/no proposition. This essay suggests that it may be more helpful, and more accurate, to understand religious commitment as a response to sensory experience that can be learned, and that the capacity to learn depends upon one's knowledge and belief, one's proclivity for experiencing the world in particular ways, and the impact of devotional practice.

Belief in the Invisible

Yet it is also true that in many ways it is hard for people to believe in the invisible, intentional being of God, at least in some ways and at some times. It is one thing to believe in the abstract that there is a good and loving God; it is another thing to believe that this God loves you in particular this very afternoon when your car has broken down in the rain. Many Christians struggle at some point with whether God exists or with whether they understand God's nature. A young man may come to university as a devout Christian, take a course on religion, and begin to wonder whether Christ as well as Krishna are cultural constructions. A depressed woman may understand herself as devout, but find that when she sits down to pray she feels that no one is listening to her prayers. And always there are times when terrible things happen to good and faithful people who often continued to believe in God in the abstract, but who find that they can not longer pray at all. The struggle between espoused religion (the religion one asserts; the Nicene creed) and lived religion (the way in which one experiences God from moment to moment) is central to the life of the Christian, and perhaps to the lives of most believers.

The problem for believers is that to experience the Christian God as present, one must override three basic features of human psychology, features that are also part of our evolutionary inheritance. A person must override the expectation that our minds are private, an expectation so substantial that researchers have shown that it develops around the world at a more or less similar age and can be found even in non-human primates. A person must override the expectation that persons are visible. And finally, a person must override the expectation that love is conditional, as it is for all social beings beyond a certain age, when right behavior is expected as a condition of human interaction. At least, some versions of Christianity expect unconditional love.

The deep puzzle of faith is not *why* but *how*. How is it possible that people are able to violate such fundamental expectations of presence? The answer, in part, is that they do not. For most Christians, it will be a lifelong process to believe in all times and in all ways that their God is real for them in the way that their church tells them that God is real. As the psalmist laments: "how long wilt thou forget me, Oh Lord? For ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?" (Psalm 13: 1). What they do to make God plausible for them depends upon their understanding of God and on what the social world of a faith teaches about how to experience their minds and bodies to find evidence for God's presence.

Learning to Sense the Presence of God

In 2004 I set out to study ethnographically the way God becomes real for people in a church that would exacerbate the cognitive burden of belief. I chose an example of the new Protestant church that grew up after the 1960s. [2] Those churches set out as an invitation to experience God as concretely and as vividly as God had been experienced by the earliest

Christian disciples. This God is both intensely human and intensely supernatural. In these churches, God is understood as so person-like that he becomes someone to joke and argue with, someone one chats to when walking down the street, about the little trivial things that matter only to the congregant. Coming to know God in such a church is described as to hear God "speak." Dallas Willard, a beloved evangelical's intellectual, puts it baldly: that God's face-to-face conversations with Moses are the "normal human life God intended for us." I conducted ethnographic fieldwork at a church that exemplifies this approach to God, a Vineyard Christian Fellowship in Chicago and then on the San Francisco peninsula (there were eight such churches in Chicago and four on the peninsula). For three years I went to Sunday morning gatherings. I joined three small groups, or housegroups, each for a year; I went to conferences and retreats; and I interviewed many congregants casually and also more formally about the way they experienced God.

Overall, what I observed was that the process of coming to know God in such a church could best be described as a mapping process in which the congregants learn to use the familiar experience of their own minds and bodies to give content to the abstract experience of God. This is the way that humans learn most commonplace abstract words, in effect cognitively mapping from what we know to what we can only imagine. God speaks: so congregants learn to infer from their own experience of inner speech the way in which God talks to them. God relates: so congregants learn to imagine a relationship with God based on their own experience of relationship. And God loves: and congregants use their own experience of being loved by a human as an example of the way they are loved by God. But unlike learning about time, congregants also map back. They build up a model of God by interpreting out of their own familiar experience into a representation shaped by the social world of the church and the narrative of the sacred text, and then they seek to re-map their own interior emotional experience by matching it to this representation. This demands constant effort, continual work on the way one pays attention and interprets one's experience. As an ethnographer, I could see three kinds of work.

First, God must be recognized as present. What congregants learn to do is to cherry-pick mental events out of the everyday flow of their awareness, and to identify that moment as other than themselves, as being of God. God was said to speak in several different ways. He spoke through the Bible, so that a verse "jumped out" at a congregant, or in some way drew their attention. For example:

"I was reading in [some book] and I don't even know why I was reading it. There's a part where God talks about raising up elders in the church to pray for the church. And I remember, it just stuck in my head and I knew that the verse was really important and that it was applicable to me. I didn't know why. It was one of those, let me put it in my pocket and figure it out later." How did she know that it was important? "Because I just felt it. I just felt like it really spoke to me. I don't really know why. And a couple of days later a friend asked me to be on the prayer team and it was like, wow, that's what it was."

God spoke also through circumstances. What a skeptic might interpret as coincidence is understood as God's intentional decision to direct the congregant's attention. For example:

"Everything in my life right now is focused on trying to get to England, and I needed to get some ID pictures. So I was really anxious—the money hasn't really come together—and one afternoon I just felt like God said, you need to get up and go get those. Go get those ID pictures that you need. I was like, that's totally inefficient. I don't have a car, so it's like walking half an hour to Walgreens and another half an hour back. Like, I could do this later and combine it with several things I need to get done. But I felt it was a step of faith to do this thing. So I did it—grumbling. Then on the way there and back I ran into three people I knew, and I felt that there was a kind of pattern, and that I was in the right place at the right time."

These ways of recognizing God are widely shared in many forms of Christianity. More specific to experiential evangelical Christianity is the expectation that God will speak directly into the mind, by placing a mental image or thought or sensation there. For example:

"I'm praying for someone and, you know, they say their situation, what they want me to pray for. I start praying and start trying to, you know, really experience God, and, you know, I see these vivid images, and I'm explaining these vivid images and what I think they mean and, you know, sort of checking in with the person, you know, does this resonate with you? They're like "oh, my gosh, yes! How did you know that?"

Most congregants find this process of pulling out specific thoughts and ascribing them to God baffling at first: again, the process violates the basic human experience that the mind is private. A congregant commented: "now I know that the 'something' is God, God's voice. But I didn't at all have words to describe it at that time I didn't understand. It was very confusing."

The social world of the church taught specific ways to differentiate between mental events that are God and that are not. This technique has been taught in the church since the earliest time as "discernment," although the content of the word and its rules has varied with the era. In the modern experiential evangelical church, the rules of discernment are more often taught by example and gossip than explicitly. Nevertheless, there appeared to be four principles. A thought might be said to come from God if: the thought was unexpected; the thought was consonant with God's nature; the congregant had additional confirmation (one "tested" the thought); and one felt peace during the experience. The process was understood to be ambiguous, and left room not only for the congregant to be wrong, but for different congregants to disagree about whether God had, in fact, spoken in a particular manner. One afternoon, a woman spoke in front of the church explaining that God had spoken to her and told her that she should carry out some mission work in a lovely part of Mexico. The man sitting next to me said drily, "God sure wants a lot of evangelizing in Puerto Vallarta."

Second, God must be experienced in relationship. Such churches invite congregants to experience God in their imaginations as a person. Again, this violates a basic psychological expectation: persons have faces to observe and hands to shake. Human relational interactions are based on sensorial response. Churches like the Vineyard explicitly suggest that one should imagine a sensorial response from God and encouraged congregants to participate in a kind of let's pretend play in which God was present. The pastor suggested one Sunday morning that congregants should put out a second cup of coffee for God, and sit down with him to chat. People went on "date night" with God. They would get a sandwich, and sit down on park bench to talk with God as they imagined his arm around their shoulders. They would ask God truly trivial questions like what shirt they should wear in the morning and what movie he thought they would like. These behaviors were clearly play-like. One congregant remarked: "I definitely do that. When I can't decide what to wear. Like, God, what should I wear?" Then she laughed. "And you know, then I kind of forget about the fact that I asked God. I think God cares about really, really little things in my life. I mean I know God cares, but I don't expect him to tell me what to wear. I'm like, Oh, I think I'll wear that and forget I even asked God!" This invitation to play was C.S. Lewis' explicit contribution to twentieth century Christianity: "let us pretend to turn the pretense into a reality." In churches which encourage such play, heresy fades in importance. The pastors and the committed congregants worry about "deadness," not flawed imagining.

Third, congregants must learn to respond emotionally to God as if God is real. If God is real, a Christian (at least, the modern evangelical Christian) should experience the emotions that one would feel if one were loved unconditionally. Most do not. It is, in fact, difficult for humans to experience themselves as unconditionally loved because no matter how warm and loving a parent may be, at some point the child is expected to control his or her behavior and parental love will becomes contingent. The task of feeling unconditionally loved imposes upon the congregant not only the burden of identifying and relating to an invisible being, but experiencing emotions in response to that being's love which the congregant rarely, if ever, truly experiences. Congregants talk about the experience of unconditional love as rare: they speak of "those moments" when one really feels God's love.

> I was driving home from grocery shopping in the car and I stopped at a light and suddenly for no reason that I could come up with, I was weeping and I felt a massive and awesome sense of the presence of God in the car with me. It just came and I had absolutely no control over it. I pulled over to the side of the road—I remember thinking that I was *so in love* with Jesus at that moment that no one else on the planet could come close. After about twenty minutes of real intensity the feeling subsided somewhat, but the presence of Jesus stayed with me. I drove home not really ever able to fully express what happened without sounding like I'd taken something illegal.

The more immediate aim seemed to be to experience what Galatians 5:22-23 calls the "fruits of the spirit": love, joy, peace, patience and so forth. The social life of the church was rich in emotional practices which sought to reshape the congregants' interior emotional world by modeling the self on God, or on the self as seen from God's loving perspective. One of the most important was prayer ministry, where the person for whom the prayer is given is often crying and in visible pain; those around the person are offering prayers which describe the ways in which the sobbing person is loved by God. Another was treating prayer like a psychotherapy session. One congregant explained: "It's just like talking to a therapist, especially in the beginning when you're revealing things that are deep in your heart and deep in your soul, the things that have been pushed down and denied." In these churches which emphasize God's love and intimacy, hell and fear largely disappear.

The central demand of these learning practices is to use one's own mental experience as evidence and content for the responsive presence of this God, who is believed to be other than oneself, and to use pretend play to integrate those mental events into a representation that is persuasively external to the self. The emotional practices provide both direct evidence of God's love and, more generally, evidence that participation in church is satisfying and worthwhile. In effect the process asks the congregants to carve God out of their own experience and to experience those phenomena as other; and it uses the emotional practices taught by the church and the social world of the congregation to help them hold that God separate and apart and lovingly responsive.

This is hard work to do, and not everyone was able to do it, or to do it easily. Here two congregants describe their difficulty in experiencing God directly despite their efforts.

Jake: "I remember desperately wanting to draw closer to God, and [to have] one of these inspired Holy Spirit moments … I wanted those [experiences] and I sought them out, but I never found myself encountering them"

Irene: "I don't understand the gift of prophecy completely. I'll probably never will and I don't have it and I don't want it because it would scare me."

Here is another congregant who has been able to do so:

Nora: "It was pretty early on in my relationship with him. I was just all full of myself one morning. I just had wonderful devotions and worships and just felt so close. I went out, and it was the most god-awful day. It was icy rain and gray and cold and it was sleeting. I'm just full of the joy of the Lord, and I say, "God, I praise you that it isn't snowing, and that nothing's accumulating, and that the streets aren't icy"—and then I went around the corner, and I hit a patch of ice, and just about went down. It was so funny to me. I just burst out laughing out loud. It was just so funny that he would put me in my place in such a slapstick personal kind of way. But then he just graced me the rest of the morning. The bus showed up right away, which it never does. I was reading, and I missed my stop to get off, and I heard God say, "Get off the bus." I looked up and hollered, and the bus actually stopped, half a block on, to let me get off. I just felt that intimacy all morning. Like when you go from holding a new boyfriend's hand to kissing him goodnight …."

Some people experience God speaking directly to them in an easy relationship. Others do not.

As a result of my involvement with the Templeton group, I decided to carry out some quantitative and experimental work to see whether we could figure out the differences between those who found it easy to do this work, and those for whom it was difficult. That work suggests that there is a psychological capacity that makes the process of knowing this kind of God easier, though its absence does not prevent religious experience, and its presence does not predict it. It is the capacity for absorption, which is at the heart of imagination. Absorption is the capacity to focus one's attention on a non-instrumental (and often internal) object while disattending to everyday exterior surrounds. Absorption is related to hypnosis and dissociation, but not identical to either. All of us go into light absorption states when we settle into a book and let the story carry us away. There are no known physiological markers of an absorption state, but as the absorption grows deeper, the person becomes more difficult to distract, and his sense of time and agency begins to shift. He lives within his imagination more, whether that be simple mindfulness or elaborate fantasy, and he feels that the experience happens to him, that he is a bystander to his own awareness, more himself than ever before, or perhaps absent, but in any case different. And as the absorption grows deeper, people often experience more imagery and more sensory phenomena, sometimes with hallucinatory vividness. Scholars do not discuss training in absorption, although researchers of hypnosis and dissociation are clear that some kind of practice effects can be seen. [3]

Conclusion

Prayer is basically training in absorption, at least the kind of prayer in which the person praying focuses inwardly and disattends to the everyday world in order to engage with God. It would be hard to over-estimate the importance placed on prayer and prayer experience in a church like this and indeed, in Christian America today. Many of the best-selling Christian books are books on prayer technique, and they sell in the millions. Such books often begin by presenting the concrete sensory experience of God described in the Hebrew Bible as the everyday relationship for which the ordinary believer should strive. In these manuals, the act of praying is understood as a skill that has to be deliberately learned. I discovered that these evangelical congregants assumed that prayer was a skill which had to be taught, that it was hard, that not everyone was good at it, and that those who were naturally good and well trained would experience changes associated with a more richly developed inner world. Their mental images would seem sharper; they would be more likely to report unusual sensory experiences. They would be more able, in short, to experience God. The more quantitative work—done in collaboration with Howard Nusbaum and Ron Thisted--suggests that those who have a proclivity for absorption and who trained that proclivity through prayer are indeed more able to accomplish the demanding learning that this concept of God sets out. [4] They are more able to identify God's presence in their mind. They are more likely to experience God as an invisible companion. They may be more capable of responding to God emotionally.

All theologies have trade-offs. This one offers an intensely personal and person-like God. He can comfort, like a friend, and respond directly, like a friend. He can be like a real social relationship for those who make the effort to experience him in this way. But because that social relationship lacks so many features of actual human sociality—no visible body, no responsive face, no spoken voice—such a theology demands a great deal of effort from those who follow it. They must constantly work with their attention, reinterpreting the ordinary and natural into the presence of the extra-ordinary and super-natural. Faiths which manage God differently—less personal, more present in the everyday natural world—make fewer demands on their followers' attentional habits. But it may be, perhaps, that such a God may be easier to take for granted. Paradoxically, it may be that this high-maintenance, effortful God appeals to so many modern people (as many as a quarter of all Americans, according to a recent Pew study) precisely because the work demanded makes the God feel more real in a world in which disbelief is such a real social option.

References

[1] Scholars who contribute to this perspective include Scott Atran, Justin Barrett, Pascal Boyer, Stewart Guthrie, and Harvey Whitehouse.

[2] These churches have been described by Miller, D. 1997. *Reinventing American Protestantism*. Berkeley: University of California; see also Wuthnow, R. 1998. After heaven: spirituality in America since the 1950s. Berkeley: University of California Press. A survey by the Pew Foundation 2006 (Pew, 2006, *Spirit and Power: Ten nation survey*. Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life) found that 23% of all Americans belong to a loosely similar style of "renewalist Christianity."

[3] Good summaries of work on hypnosis and dissociation, with some reference to absorption, can be found in Spiegel, H. and D. Spiegel. 2004[1978], *Trance and treatment*. New York: Basic Books; Seligman, R. and L. Kirmayer. 2008, "Dissociative experience and cultural neuroscience." *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry 32*(1): 31-64; and Butler, L. 2006, "Normative dissociation." *Psychiatric Clinics of North America. 29*: 45-62.

[4]The empirical work is presented in Luhrmann, T., H. Nusbaum and R. Thisted. 2010. "The absorption hypothesis." *American Anthropologist.* March; cf. Tellegen, A. and G. Atkinson. 1974, "Openness to absorption and self altering experiences ("absorption"), a trait related to hypnotic susceptibility." *Journal of Abnormal Psychology 83*: 268-277

Belief and Connection

We tend to think of beliefs as wisps of the mind that have no power in the material world. However, as Gary Berntson and Louise Hawkley have discussed, beliefs can affect our health even to the extent of determining life and death. As Tanya Luhrmann discusses, in some forms of Christianity, there is a real belief in the presence of God. This is not simply a belief of God in the world, but a belief of a God who is by one's side. The idea of God as a friend and companion clearly motivates the desire to make such a presence manifest in tangible ways. For some, it is the sense of God with which they commune, for others it is what they believe to be a sensory experience of God that they seek. Luhrmann outlines how this belief, coupled with a supportive social structure, can lead to powerful personal experiences, such as hearing the voice of God, reflecting the operation of our social brains.

Our sense of social connection is not dependent on a single set of religious beliefs, however. In human social connections, we can form individual relationships with a spouse or friends but, as John Cacioppo outlined, there are other kinds of connections that our social brain seeks, as well. We seek connections with emergent structures such as groups, clubs, teams, congregations, and beyond. Kathryn Tanner argues that the belief that God created the world and bears causal responsibility for it serves to connect believers to life in a broader way than is provided through individual relationships. This broader connection to life does not depend on the manifestation of a presence to whom we can talk because the evidence of social connection is apparent in the very fabric of daily existence. Thus, whereas Luhrmann discusses God as a palpable friend that one can learn to attend to and experience as an active presence in one's life, Tanner discusses God as the initiator of life and the very fabric of existence, a presence so ubiquitous that there is no specific point on which one can focus to attend to or experience God.

God
human
one
life
Christian
presence
creator
believe
world
relationship
beliefs
sense
social
influences
invisibility
created
ordinary
like
way
case
good

Chapter 13[13]

Theological Perspectives on God as an Invisible Force

An individual's beliefs about God are one factor to be included in a multi-dimensional investigation of the social consequences and possible health benefits of religion, an aid in particular to scientific hypothesis generation.[x] Scientists can better test for the social and health consequences of religious commitment when they know more about the character and range of beliefs about God that such commitment brings. This chapter hopes to show, in particular, that exactly what Christians believe about the nature of God's influence on their lives is likely to have an important bearing on one of the questions of this volume: How can religion encourage a sense of connection to others, especially in situations of perceived social isolation, and thereby assuage the adverse health consequences of loneliness?

Depending on what they think God is like, Christians vary in the way they expect God to be a present influence on their daily lives. God's nature is supernatural or transcendent, which means God is not very much like any of the ordinary persons or things with which they come into regular contact. Christians use the same terms for God that they use for talking about ordinary persons and things but they therefore know that neither set of terms is really adequate to capture who or what God is. On the one hand, God is something like a human being in that God loves them and wants to do them good, and in that God is unhappy with their failings and trying, through the use of carrots and sticks, to get them to change. But, on the other hand, God is really not very much like an ordinary human being in that God is present at all times and everywhere, working inexorably to bring about what God intends throughout the entirety of peoples' lives by way of influences of both personal and impersonal sorts--for example, through personal words of advice and warning found in the Bible as well as apparent accidents of fortune like car crashes and the weather. Though retaining personal characteristics such as love or anger, God operates less like an individual human person with limited reach and partial interests, and more like light, air or gravity do—quite pervasively and constantly.

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Christian beliefs are not just theoretical matters, involving putative truth claims about the nature of ultimate reality, but practical ones: Christian beliefs are often promulgated with the hope of impacting the way human beings live, by establishing, for example, the meaningfulness of and motivations for certain forms of social behavior. Prior research has concerned the possible economic, social and political consequences of Christian beliefs about God's relation to the world. This essay extends such questioning to the topic of perceived social isolation. How might belief in God as an invisible force in everyday life affect an individual's sense of social connection?

Usually one side or the other comes to the fore in the way Christians feel connected to God: for some Christians the personal side of God is central; for others, the more impersonal. Thus, some Christians expect God to be very much like a human friend, offering companionship and good advice.[xi] As Tanya Luhrmann explores in her essay, their religious lives often revolve around the internal sensory or imaginative experiences that make a God of that sort seem real to them--the sense that God is in the room with them, that God speaks to them, and so on. They work to cultivate a prayer life that heightens the vividness of those experiences and thereby allays doubts about the actual existence of this invisible, otherwise seemingly unreal, divine friend. In short, good practitioners of prayer gain a stronger and more reliable sense that God is present as a friend directing the course of their lives.

Other Christians have expectations of a more overarching and impersonal sort about the way God is a force in their lives; these expectations, I suggest below, are the consequence of their holding certain beliefs about God as the creator, sustainer, and savior of the world. In this case a strong sense of God's presence in one's life does not depend on having experiences of a literally personal sort or on developing the spiritual practices that help cultivate such experiences. The sense that God is present as an influence on one's life is rather something one feels all the time simply in virtue of the beliefs one holds about God and the world. Given a particular construal of those beliefs—a relatively impersonal one, I argue—simply having those beliefs in mind, with some awareness of their quite obvious presuppositions and implications, makes clear one is never alone, never a self-sufficient operator. In contrast to the understanding of God as friend, here God's invisibility does not threaten to interrupt a sense of God's presence and influence. God's invisibility to the contrary enables the sense of God's presence and influence to be the routine backdrop of all one's experience, to constitute a general outlook on the world, no matter what the circumstances.

Belief in Creation as a Backdrop to the Whole of Life

For example, a common Christian construal of the belief that God is the creator of the world makes it possible for the sense that God is with one—one's supporter and sustainer—to be a constant feature of one's life as a whole. Contrary to first impressions, God's creation of the world need not refer to the origin of the universe, or to the beginning of its more specific features or components. Were either to be its meaning, belief in God as the creator of the world could not be a very central component of a generally applicable Christian outlook, of much relevance, that is, for more than the occasional speculation about origins: e.g., why am I here at all? The belief concerns instead a causal dependence upon God of a more continuous sort, spanning, in short, the whole time of the universe's existence and therefore the whole time of one's individual life. To be created by God is to exist in a relation of dependence upon God for what one is, However, long one exists.[xii] A human being therefore depends upon God for more than the fact of his or her birth: he or she remains dependent upon God in the same way ever after. God's creation of the world in general is simply not temporally indexed; it is no more closely associated with the beginning of things than with what comes later. A preoccupation with temporal origins therefore commonly drops out of Christian accounts of creation: the world is just as dependent upon God for its existence whether it has a beginning or always exists.[xiii] Belief in God's creation of the world for these reasons blurs into belief in God's supportive maintenance of it at every point in time.

Also enabling belief in God as creator to form a general backdrop to all one's experience—to be relevant on every occasion as a universally applicable worldview--is the fact that God is thought to be responsible as creator for the whole of what happens in the world at any one time. To believe that God is the creator of the world is at the very least to believe that God holds into existence the entirety of the world in any and all respects in which it is good. In the case of one's own life, therefore, every aspect of value at every moment—one's existence, fine qualities and capacities, enjoyments and achievements, beneficial connections with natural and social environments, and so on—is to be attributed to God's agency as creator. While there is a good deal of disagreement within Christianity on this matter, Christians, moreover, not uncommonly affirm that God is equally behind the bad things that happen, at least insofar as those bad things can be turned to good account--for example, harm suffered turned into a salutary pedagogical correction, just punishment for sin, the necessary testing of one's faith, or simply a beneficial form of sympathy with God's own suffering on the cross. For both the general reasons just mentioned—because of its holism and temporal inclusiveness--belief in God as the creator of the world encourages love, gratitude, and trust toward God, and toward the world that God brings about, as constant Christian dispositions, basic Christian attitudes of wide-ranging applicability, whatever might be going on in one's life.

Social Connectedness and Invisibility

The same all-inclusive causal dependence upon God at all times is what ensures individuals are never left on their own, never abandoned to their own devices. Christian theologians (especially in the Protestant tradition) usually develop the psychological implications of this in terms of avoiding either anxious or arrogant self-concern.[xiv] According to this theology, one does not believe he or she ever operates independently of God. Therefore, one should never attribute successes and achievements in a prideful way to oneself, but rather one should always give the glory to God as their ultimate source. For the same reason, one should never despair of failings, as if one's own inadequacies were the last word; one believes a supremely powerful and loving influence, God, remains an operative force in one's life, However, desperate the situation otherwise appears to be from the standpoint of one's own powers and capacities to improve one's lot in life.

By discouraging isolated self-regard or self-understanding generally, the same nexus of Christian ideas about God as creator has clear consequences for loneliness or perceived social isolation. Because they believe themselves to be creatures of God, Christians feel related to God whatever happens. Whatever their social circumstances--no matter, at the extreme, how isolated or strong their feelings of abandonment by human others--individuals are to remember that they remain in a relationship with God, who is concerned about them. Even when they feel themselves utterly forsaken by others, Christians have reason to believe God cannot be forsaking them. They can believe they are never alone even when they appear to be absolutely so. In such circumstances, Christians can always avail themselves of a completely counterfactual sense of social connection with the best-connected "superfriend" of all—the God who remains, they believe, in a relationship of ultimately beneficial causal efficacy with not just themselves but everyone and everything.

It is the very unapparent, counterfactual character of God's influence on human lives—the invisibility of God's influence, in short--that permits Christians to perceive their relationship with God as an unbreakable constant. Because God's influence is unapparent or invisible Christians can continue to believe God is operative for creation's benefit in the absence of any of the obvious confirming evidence required in ordinary cases of beneficent human influence. Christians who believe that God is a universal influence for good as the world's creator do not expect God to be present in the way one expects a human person to be; and therefore God's apparent absence, in human terms, need not break down their sense of being in relation to God.

Having God as one's creator (in the best case scenario) is like having a perfectly loving human benefactor; but it is the unusual invisibility of this benefactor that allows Christians to think God present even when not apparently so. Being in a relationship with God for Christians who believe God is a good creator is something like being in a relationship with a human person who never lets one out of her sight and who intends one's good comprehensively. It is, for example, very like being in a relationship with a loving parent who is fully responsible, not just for the fact of one's existence, but in a comprehensive way for one's nurturance throughout an extended minority. Unlike a relationship with an ordinary human person of that sort, however, God is believed to be invisible and this is what allows individuals to assume God's constant presence, all appearances to the contrary.

The invisibility that underlies the Christian affirmation of God's constancy here is a function of the very diffuseness of God's influence, a diffuseness of influence no human person, invisible or otherwise, could possibly match. Belief in God as the creator of the world does not encourage one to single out God as the cause of any specific happening in a way that suggests God is one cause among many, the cause of this particular happening rather than some other with a different cause. Belief in God as the creator of the world does not allow one to identify God's influence in overly close fashion with any particular causal influence of a beneficent sort. Instead, as I have suggested, whatever is of benefit to the individual, over the long or short term, taken as a whole, is to be attributed to God's influence.

The Christian cannot, then, locate or pick out God as one could a loving parent from within the field of variously operative forces or influences on one's life, and for that reason the Christian need neither fear God's loss nor rue God's absence as one would such a parent's. Unlike relations with human others, which are situation-sensitive and thereby susceptible to change of character, rupture, and decline, God, Christians believe, is with one, whatever happens, in exactly the same capacity--as the creator and sustainer of whatever it is that remains good about one's life, be that only at a minimum the bare fact that one continues to live. The Christian who believes God is his or her creator is therefore confident that God continues to work for his or her ultimate good, that God is engaged in the effort to increase it, whatever the impediments in human life suggesting the contrary, absent, that is, almost any confirming evidence.

The Problem of Inattention

Although invisibility and apparent absence do not pose the same problem here as they do when God is one's friend, this rather more impersonal understanding of God's influence as creator and sustainer has its own problem maintaining a strong sense of connection to God. The diffuseness of influence that lies behind God's constant invisible presence can prompt simple Christian inattention to God. The very monotony of the always pertinent Christian affirmation that everything is to be attributed to God can make that affirmation recede from focal awareness, make it fail to come focally to mind. Belief in God's uniform presence would thereby become functionally indistinguishable from the sense of God's absence. The invisibility of God that follows from a belief in the comprehensiveness of God's influence simply means in that case that God drops out of sight and mind, drops out of Christian consideration for most intents and purposes, most of the time. Such a God has little to offer as a "para-social" entity, as a factor fomenting or supplementing a sense of social connection.

In the back of their minds Christians may believe that God is the source of everything, but they may not feel compelled to consider that fact actively in the course of their everyday lives. God hides behind, so to speak, all the creaturely influences that God is working through, which become matters of primary Christian preoccupation. At the center of attention are all the ordinary influences and connections with one's natural and human environments; preoccupation with them pushes out of focal awareness the fact of God as the ultimate source of them all. Apart from specifically religious obligations—say, the demand to give God thanks and praise at times of worship—Christians who believe God is their creator would have no particular reason to dwell on that fact.

Christian theologians commonly tie this sort of practical worry--about what from a Christian point of view amounts to sinful neglect of one's connection to God--to the understanding of double agency in the account of creation I sketched above.[xv] According to that account, it is true, God's influence on human life does not have to go by way of the human and natural causal powers and influences on human life that God creates; God can influence human life without producing sufficient created causes for what God wants to happen in human life. (The Christian claim that Jesus was resurrected from the dead—an event without natural causes--is a case in point, one that Christians are usually very reluctant to give up.) But part and parcel of the account of creation is the suggestion that God ordinarily influences human life by bringing about the very natural and human influences that shape it. In general, because God influences the world as its creator, God's working does not begin where created causes break off; God works, instead, in and through the created causes that God brings about. Christians are therefore able to give a double account of most happenings in the world: one that discusses what has happened in terms of the coordinated created powers and activities sufficient to explain it within the created order; and one that talks about God's creative activity in bringing about those same coordinated created powers, activities, and their consequences in their totality. It is the sufficiency of the explanation in terms of created causes—the self-containment of that explanation within its own order—that allows human beings to attend to the created order without taking into account the relationship of dependence upon God that is its presupposition.

The temptation to lapse into habitual obliviousness of one's relationship with God is easily countered, however, by other beliefs about God that Christians hold. Christians do not just believe that God is the creator and sustainer of the universe, but believe a lot of other things about God. For example, the common Christian belief that God acts as more than a creator in individual lives helps to counter obliviousness to God. God does not merely act as creator by giving individuals the created gifts that make them what they are—for example, their own capacities and operations, the ability to influence and be influenced by their human and natural environments, and so on. God also acts to give them God's very presence—by way, for example, of their relationship with Christ who Christians believe is God in human flesh. The very presence of God in human life means one's relationship with God cannot be ignored. The created causes and influences, through which God also influences human life, consequently no longer have the same capacity to distract human attention from God.

Christians often believe, moreover, that God's direction of human life by way of God's own presence to or within it is no optional matter: God's presence forms an essential component of human life. In addition to created capacities and influences brought about by God, God's presence is necessary for ordinary human capacities to operate as they should.[xvi] To be morally good, for example, requires not just virtuous capacities of one's own, given to one by God, but the presence of the Holy Spirit within one. Knowing well requires not just the formation of good ideas through the usual human processes of investigating one's environment—the entirety of which has its source in a good creator God--but also a mind informed by the very Word of God. And so on.

Such beliefs imply that attention to God's presence, some sort of God-directedness, should be a constant feature of an individual's everyday, ordinary life, in order for that life to be lived well. The individual Christian is accordingly given a reason to bring to mind his or her relationship with God, motivated to attend to that relationship as much as possible, indeed, in the effort to lead a better life. An active God-reference becomes part of a prospective, goal-oriented process of self-reformation in accord with what is believed to be God's intentions for one.

Beliefs like this about God's presence as a constituent feature of human operations are at times incorporated by Christians within an account of creation: God's presence to or within them is then believed to be an element of what God as the creator of the world gives to every human being; and is in that sense part of the natural or ordinary constitution of human life that God intends in creating the world.[xvii] But more often than not the gift of God's presence as an effective influence on human life is specifically associated by Christians with salvation. Human beings, Christians typically believe, have either lost altogether, or at a minimum, habitually fail to attend properly to a presence of God always theirs, in ways that corrupt human well-being. The Christian claim is that God saves human beings by giving them the presence of God as an effective force for human transformation in virtue of something that Jesus suffers or accomplishes.

God acts as an invisible force in human lives here because God influences humans through God's very presence. Christians, if they follow the common teaching of theologians in this regard, believe God is invisible or unapparent because God is not capable of being delimited or circumscribed by the usual boundary drawing and sorting mechanisms used to cordon off and pin down other things.[xviii] God is not, in short, a kind of thing, set off by clear boundaries that distinguish God from what God is not. But there is also here the kind of invisibility discussed earlier: the invisibility of apparent absence in human terms.

Christian claims about salvation often have an eschatological edge. They frequently point, that is, to an end time, indefinitely deferred from the perspective of anything achievable in this life. What God gives to remedy the sin of human life through Christ is, accordingly, not commonly thought to be fully effective in any visible way in this life. Christians typically think that their connection to Jesus brings with it a new availability of the presence of God as a force for change in their lives, but what they expect to achieve by way of that constantly available relationship remains invisible in the form of an always deferred hope. Once again it is invisibility—here the invisibility of the revolutionary changes in one's life for which one continues to hope--that permits Christians to believe the presence of God, made available to them in a new way in Christ for the very purpose of bringing about those changes, is nevertheless always with them.

Conclusion

The main intention of this chapter was to make the case that basic Christian beliefs are likely to have a bearing on perceived social isolation. After suggesting that Christianity is not all of a piece on that score, I developed a particular construal of basic Christian beliefs that would seem to have great potential to alleviate perceived social isolation through attention to connection with God. While that argument was merely a logical or prima facie one, it forms a testable—though as yet untested—hypothesis: Does the particular construal of the beliefs commended here for their encouragement of a focal sense of constant connection with God really have those consequences? Do people actually feel less lonely, in other words, when they hold such beliefs? Can they be made to feel less lonely by calling them to mind? More specifically, how does the influence of this construal on feelings of social isolation compare with that of other construals—for example, a construal that directly associates God's creative influence with the irredeemable bad? How might the stronger sense of God's presence in the hardships one suffers balance out in the latter case against the unhappy quality of the connection? Might one feel oneself to be better off alone, in other words, if God is as much one's tormentor as one's benefactor? Finally, comparable problems to the ones for belief surface in the more experience-driven God-as-friend outlook in Christianity, and make experimental testing pertinent.[xix] If the problem in both cases is that a strong sense of connection with God is hard to sustain—because God is invisible in the one case or crowded out by more obviously pressing matters in the other—how is the imaginative force of the idea of relationship with God better shored up? By imagining that one is on a date with God, or by imagining that God is always all around one like the air one breathes or the sun that shines? And what works for the greater number of people? What if the former imaginative capacities are hard to cultivate, and require in any case exceptional abilities of concentration or inward focus that many people lack? Might beliefs be easier for most people to hold in mind without sustained or disciplined practice? A simple visit to church or occasional perusal of a prayer book would do?

References

[1] For the general importance of belief for such investigation, see the essays by W. Clark Gilpin and Tanya Luhrmann in this volume.

[1] See Luhrmann in this volume.

[1] Thomas Aquinas is one prominent theologian in the Christian tradition who highlights this idea: "creation . . . is the very dependency of the created act of being upon the principle [God] from which it is produced." *Summa Contra Gentiles, Book Two: Creation*, trans. James F. Anderson (Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), chapter 18, section 2, p. 55.

[1] See again, for example, Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles, Book Two: Creation*, chapters 31-38, pp. 91-115.

[1] See, for example, Martin Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), in *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), vols. 26-27.

[1] Thomas Aquinas again provides a clear theological exposition of this view. See, for example, his *Summa Contra Gentiles, Book Three: Providence, Part 1*, trans. Vernon J. Bourke (Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), chapter 70, section 8, p. 237: "It is also apparent that the same effect is not attributed to a natural cause and to divine power in such a way that it is partly done by God, and partly by the natural agent; rather, it is wholly done by both."

[1] For prominent examples of such a view in the history of Christian thought, see Augustine, *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, trans. John Hammond Taylor (New York: Newman Press, 1982), chapters 10-12, pp. 49-51; and Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on the Gospel According to John*, trans. P. E. Pusey (Oxford: James Parker, 1874), Book 1, chapters 7-9, pp. 66-87.

[1] See, for example, Athanasius, "On the Incarnation of the Word," trans. Archibald Robertson, in Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (eds.), *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. IV, Second Series (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1957), sections 3-5, pp. 37-39.

[1] See, for example, Gregory of Nyssa, "Answer to Eunomius' Second Book," trans. M. Day, in Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (eds.), *Nicene and Post-*

Nicene Fathers, vol. V, Second Series (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1994), p. 257.

[1] See Luhrmann in this volume.

The Elusiveness of Meaningful Connection

Kathryn Tanner's chapter has developed the classical Christian idea that God is the creator and sustainer of the world, in order to suggest the ways in which this notion of the creator might be one factor providing persons with a sense of social connection and a hopeful, generous, and caring disposition toward the world that assuages the adverse health consequences of loneliness. In this classic interpretation of God as creator, the idea refers not to the origins of the universe but rather to the all-inclusive dependence of life upon God at all times. This sense of a sustaining divine presence spanning the whole time of one's life thus contributes a deep sense of one's connection to the whole order of creation. However, as Tanner notes, people may become inattentive to a presence so pervasive, just as people can become inattentive to the forces of gravity holding them to the surface of the Earth as they go about their everyday life. In more extreme versions of this inattention, the person understands humanity as "alone" in the universe, a sort of metaphysical loneliness that might exacerbate more concrete feelings of loneliness.

Perhaps surprisingly, Chris Masi, from the perspective of a physician and medical researcher, casts a fascinating and fresh perspective on the theological notion that we live in a sustaining connection to creation as a whole. After describing the negative health consequences of loneliness, Masi proceeds to describe a cycle of loneliness in which a person's sense of isolation frustrates well-intended efforts to make social connections. Masi finds that efforts to intervene and break this cycle are not notably successful, in large part because the preconscious disposition of lonely people toward the world is difficult to change. Like Tanner, although using different terminology, Masi's review of the scientific literature suggests both that the character of one's general disposition toward the world is profoundly important for one's connections to others, and that the processes by which these general dispositions change are complex and warrant further scientific attention.

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Chapter 14[14]

Visible Efforts to Change Invisible Connections

Human capacity for creativity, compassion, and learning is unparalleled in the animal kingdom. However, humans reach their full potential only when they are socially engaged. Lack of social engagement impairs creativity and learning, and limits opportunities for caregiving and emotional growth. Numerous studies have shown that loneliness is also a risk factor for illness and premature mortality. Because loneliness is increasing in modern society, it is critically important to understand this condition, as well as strategies to reduce it. This essay describes our review of the literature regarding loneliness reduction interventions.

The 17th century English philosopher Thomas Hobbes proposed that without the organizing structure of government, humans would experience *bellum omnimum contra omnes* (war of all against all) and life would be "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short"(1). While this colorful description is often quoted, less attention is paid to Hobbes' premise that such misery can be avoided if humans codify and enforce the rules of a civil society. Not everyone agrees with Hobbes' views, but history is replete with examples of human misery when anarchy reigns and of relative peace when a social contract is observed. A question that philosophers continue to debate is whether collaboration for mutual benefit is part of human nature or whether promotion of the self above all others is man's primary motivation. In this volume, Cacioppo argues that sociality is an integral part of human nature. He notes that given each child's prolonged period of total dependence, survival into child-bearing age depends entirely upon the support and protection of adults, most often parents or kin. As a result, those who survive long enough to procreate pass along genes for nurturing and protection, thereby hardwiring a form of sociality into our genetic code.

This protective behavior helps ensure that genes within a family are passed on to future generations. Cooperation among unrelated adults or the support and protection of children by adults exists beyond kin, as well, because these activities also provide survival benefit. Examples from early human existence include hunting and gathering, which are more likely to succeed when pursued as a group than individually. To these structural benefits of non-familial sociality, we may now add physiological benefits. A 1979 population-based study showed that adults lacking social ties were 1.9 to 3.1 times more likely to die during a 9-year follow-up than those who had more social contacts, all else being equal (2). Since then, at least five population-based prospective studies (3) and numerous smaller studies have found positive associations between social integration and either survival or improved health outcomes. The mechanisms by which social integration enhances survival are several and include improved health behaviors, increased access to resources and material goods, and strengthened immunity against infection (4).

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Whereas sociality is a normal state, loneliness is an unusual state, akin to hunger, thirst, or pain (5). As with those states, loneliness is unpleasant and serves to remind us that we should change the *status quo*. Therefore, loneliness can be an adaptive motivator for increased social surveillance and interaction. Unfortunately, not all individuals succeed at achieving the level of social connectedness they desire and suffer instead from chronic feelings of loneliness. Cacioppo and others have shown that lonely individuals interpret events and social interactions more negatively than non-lonely individuals. As a result, they unconsciously develop defense mechanisms, including social barriers, which shield them from insults and rejection. While this approach may achieve its goals of self-protection, it also reduces opportunities for positive social interactions and perpetuates feelings of social isolation (5). John Bunyan, a 17th century Christian writer and preacher, described the barriers associated with loneliness when he wrote of a vision in which he

> “saw the people set on the sunny side of some high mountain, there refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, while I was shivering and shrinking in the cold, afflicted with frost, snow, and dark clouds. Methought, also, betwixt me and them, I saw a wall that did compass about this mountain (6).”

For chronically lonely people, the wall between themselves and others is partly of their own making and reflects continuous surveillance for negative signals from others (5). The challenge is to help lonely individuals break down the barriers between themselves and others and ultimately return to the normal state of sociality. In his vision, Bunyan achieved this, but only through great effort:

> “About this wall I thought myself, to go again and again, still prying as I went, to see if I could find some way or passage, by which I might enter therein, but none could I find for some time. At the last, I saw, as it were, a narrow gap, like a little doorway in the wall, through which I attempted to pass; but the passage being very strait and narrow, I made many efforts to get in, but all in vain, even until I was well-nigh quite beat out, by striving to get in; at last, with great striving, methought I at first did get in my head, and after that, by a sidling striving, my shoulders, and my whole body; then I was exceeding glad, and went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted with the light and heat of their sun (6).”

Genetic studies indicate that heritability accounts for approximately 50% of loneliness while social circumstances account for the other 50% (7). Research also suggests that loneliness is common - reported by as many as 20 percent of the population at any given time (8). In addition, some evidence suggests that the prevalence of loneliness may be increasing, at least in the U.S. A recent national survey found a threefold increase in the number of Americans who indicated they had no confidant or person with whom to discuss important matters (9). Although differences between this survey and its 1985 predecessor may be sufficient to account for this increase, this suggestive report raises the possibility that contemporary societal factors may be interfering with the natural tendency for humans to form meaningful, long-term social connections. One factor is social mobility, which increased dramatically during the 20th century. A second is the aging of the U.S. population. In 1900, 4.1% of Americans were 65 years or older. By 2006, that percentage had increased to 12.4%, representing 37.3 million Americans (10). With less value placed on older individuals in the U.S., we have witnessed an increase in marginalization of this segment of society. Third, as life expectancy increases, more elders are living longer as widows or widowers and are therefore at increased risk for loneliness. Other factors which may place Americans at increased risk for loneliness include less intergenerational living, delayed marriage, increased dual- career families, increased single-residence households, and increased age-related disabilities and health conditions. Given the mental and health risks associated with loneliness described in Hawkley's chapter, interventions are needed to help lonely individuals regain normal social connections. As Bunyan's account suggests, breaking through the wall of loneliness may require considerable effort. When individual effort is not sufficient, assistance from others may be needed. Unfortunately, contemporary interventions to reduce loneliness have fared more poorly than has been recognized.

Repairing Broken Connections

Almost a century ago, scholars began to propose strategies for reducing loneliness. Karen Rook (11), for instance, amassed over 40 interventions dating back to the 1930's in her attempt to identify effective loneliness reduction strategies. Since Rook's review, five scientific publications have provided qualitative reviews of strategies to reduce loneliness, social isolation, or both (12-16). The most recent publication identified 30 interventions published between 1970 and 2002 (16), and evaluated the effectiveness of those intervention studies that were not flawed by poor design. Among the thirteen trials deemed to be of high quality, six were considered effective, one was considered partially effective, five were considered ineffective, and one was inconclusive. The authors' conclusions were similar to those of prior reviewers who found that interventions which emphasized social skills training and/or group activities were the most successful.

However, qualitative reviews are subject to invisible biases that can color our judgments of the scientific evidence we see. Thomas Kuhn, a 20th century physicist and epistemologist, noted that scientists too easily accept results which conform to previous intuitions and too readily reject results which do not (17).

In the case of loneliness interventions, all of the reviews essentially confirmed the findings of previous reviews that social skills training and group-based interventions can succeed in reducing loneliness. Is this conclusion justified, or is this a case in which prior conclusions have been perpetuated in the manner Kuhn describes?

To combat bias favoring results that confirm dominant theories, some scientists have argued that specific study criteria should be met to warrant an evaluation of the effectiveness of the intervention (18). These criteria include random assignment of study participants to receive the intervention, evidence that the intervention is more effective than no intervention, findings that are replicated by at least one independent research group, and results that are published in peer-reviewed journals. Previous reviewers of loneliness interventions have, in fact, placed a premium on randomized trials that contrast a group randomly selected to receive the intervention with a group randomly selected to receive no intervention. However, none has employed meta-analysis, a quantitative technique for calculating the average effect of diverse interventions designed to accomplish the same goal. Whereas qualitative reviews are subjective and vulnerable to confirmatory biases, quantitative reviews are objective and relatively impervious to bias as long as all relevant studies are included in the analysis.

To minimize bias in our meta-analysis, we first combed the literature to identify all the intervention studies that specifically targeted loneliness. To further meet our criteria for inclusion in the meta-analysis, studies had to be published in a peer-reviewed journal or as a doctoral dissertation (to ensure the scientific integrity of the findings), between 1970 and 2009 (to include and extend the time interval reviewed qualitatively in prior research), and had to measure loneliness quantitatively.

Fifty-two intervention studies for loneliness met our inclusion criteria. These studies were divided into three categories based on the experimental design used to assess the effects of the intervention. Twelve studies used a single group pre-post design in which loneliness among participants was assessed at baseline and again after exposure to the intervention. The single pre-post design is weak in terms of measuring the effectiveness of an intervention, however, because individuals who have high scores on a loneliness measure on one occasion are likely to score less extremely on a second occasion even if no intervention had occurred. Said differently, people whose measurements suggest they are very lonely at one point in time, on average, appear to be less lonely when measured at a later point in time. Our meta-analysis of these studies indicated there was indeed a lowering of loneliness as measured before and after the interventions, but we cannot conclude from this evidence that the reductions in loneliness were due to the interventions.

Eighteen studies utilized a non-randomized group comparison design in which some of the participants sought out the intervention (the experimental group) while others (the control group) did not. In this design, assignment of individuals to the experimental or control groups was based upon convenience, participant preference, or some other factor, which means the groups that did and did not receive the intervention may differ in ways that explain different outcomes in the two groups. For example, people who volunteer to be in the experimental arm of a study may be more gregarious by nature and may be more likely to become less lonely over time *regardless* of exposure to the intervention. Results of the meta-analysis suggested the interventions might be effective, but to know it's the intervention and not an artifact of subject selection, we need to look at the effect of these interventions when assessed using randomized group comparison designs in which participants are randomly assigned to the experimental or control group.

Twenty-two studies utilized such a design. Quantitative analysis revealed that, on average, the interventions had a small but significant effect in reducing loneliness. Moreover, efficacy in reducing loneliness did not differ significantly as a function of intervention strategy nor as a function of individual- versus group-based implementation. Whereas once a consensus existed that social skills training and/or group activities could reduce loneliness, we found insufficient evidence to support that conclusion.

Why have successful interventions to reduce loneliness been so elusive? There are several possible reasons. Some of the interventions have been designed with the notion that if only lonely individuals had better social skills they would be able to form satisfying connections with others. However, recent research suggests that at least for most adults, the social skills they know are not related to the loneliness they feel. Other interventions have been developed with the notion that lonely individuals simply need to interact more with others, so the interventions are designed to increase contact with others. However, people not only tend to like lonely individuals less than nonlonely individuals, lonely individuals are especially negative toward other lonely individuals. Therefore, bringing lonely individuals together is unlikely to result in warm, satisfying social connections. Finally, some interventions were designed with the notion that what lonely individuals need is social support, such as someone who is available to provide help when needed. However, loneliness affects not only how people think, but how people think about others: loneliness diminishes people's executive functioning and biases them to see others as threatening and rejecting even when they are not (5).

Cacioppo and Patrick (5) proposed a framework for reducing loneliness which includes four elements. First, unconscious barriers that chronically lonely people develop to shield against being hurt by others tend to reduce their likelihood of having positive social interactions, and they may benefit, therefore, from encouragement and practice in forming social connections gradually in "safe" environments where threat of rejection is minimal. For instance, because chronically lonely people are self-focused in their hypervigilance for social threat, they may benefit from learning to shift their attention from themselves to others through other-oriented activities such as volunteerism. The notion is to intervene to diminish or eliminate the negative effects loneliness can have on social perception and cognition. Second, we tend to think of loneliness as the same thing as a personal weakness, as being a social isolate, being depressed, or being weak. As noted above, we now know these accounts to be incorrect, and that acute loneliness, just like acute physical pain, serves an important biological function for our species. Being aware of how loneliness fits into our remarkable achievements as a social species and what loneliness does to our social cognition and behavior can help us better understand the actions of others toward us. Third, to the extent that desperation for social connections leads chronically lonely individuals to misguidedly vest their interest in those who are unlikely to meet their relationship needs, they may need to learn how to be selective and choose friends and groups with whom reciprocally rewarding relationships can be expected. This decision is critical to success. Research indicates that the people with whom we are most likely to form positive, lasting relationships are those who have similar attitudes, beliefs, values, interests, and activities to our own. Therefore, people should not seek friendships based on physical appearance, status, popularity, or convenience, but rather on attitudes, beliefs, values, and behaviors. Finally, because chronically lonely people expect to be disappointed with themselves and others in their relationships, they may benefit from training and practice in taking a more optimistic perspective, in expecting the best from themselves and from others. We play a much more important role in shaping our social environment than we often realize.

Although no intervention to date has incorporated all of these elements, at least one randomized trial has demonstrated that an intervention based upon volunteerism (Experience Corps) can increase social activity in older adults (19). In this trial, older adults are paired with grade-school children and dedicate at least fifteen hours per week throughout the school year to assist the teachers in supporting and encouraging children in reading, writing, and mathematics. This strategy engages at least two of the principles that emerged out of Cacioppo and Patrick’s theoretical framework (5)—the provision of a “safe” venue for making social connections (i.e., the classroom of non-threatening children), and the shifting of older adults’ attention away from their own concerns and toward the needs of someone else. In addition, this strategy capitalizes on Erikson’s notion of generativity (i.e., helping future generations) (20). Interventions of this form deserve further assessment (21).

Conclusion

We began this chapter by noting that loneliness is not uncommon and, although unpleasant, may prompt individuals to attend to and repair their social connections. Loneliness affects cognition as well as well-being, however, and when loneliness persists it is a risk factor for myriad health problems. Previous reviewers have suggested that loneliness can be reduced through interventions that emphasize social skills development and group-based activities. By quantitatively analyzing twenty-two well-designed studies, we found no evidence that these strategies were any more effective in reducing loneliness than increasing social opportunities or social support, or modifying maladaptive social cognitions, whether in a group or individual context. A larger number of intervention studies may be needed to determine the relative efficacy of these intervention strategies. In the interim, it is clear from this review that global impressions and intuitions will not suffice when trying to reduce loneliness. Future interventions should acknowledge that loneliness is not synonymous with social isolation but is a social pain that functions to motivate the formation and renewal of meaningful social relationships. When feelings of loneliness fail to accomplish their adaptive purpose, chronic loneliness may ensue. Chronic loneliness tends to be self-perpetuating through confirmatory biases that alter cognitions, emotions, and behaviors. Given the importance of social connection to people's health and well-being, it is important that we solve the puzzle of how to help the chronically lonely connect with others in meaningful and satisfying ways.

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Reflections on Invisible Connections

Echoing a prominent theme in this volume, Christopher Masi highlights once again the centrality of social connectedness for human well-being and the function of loneliness in signaling a rupture in a sense of social connectedness. One might reasonably expect that a social species like *Homo sapiens* would have a sufficiently large behavioral repertoire to be able to resolve feelings of isolation and restore a sense of social connectedness. Although resolution is accomplished readily in some instances for some people some of the time, the reality is that at times people are at a chronic loss for how to satisfy their need for social connection. Unfortunately, the invisible bonds of social connection are not easily repaired. We see others' social activity, but we do not see how they feel about their social lives and sense of connection. Despite our inability to recognize loneliness in others, or, as Nick Epley and Jean Decety argued earlier in this volume, because of this handicap in seeing into the minds of others, we tend to attribute to others what we ourselves have felt or would expect to feel in particular circumstances. Is it any surprise that we target for intervention those circumstances where we observe few opportunities for social interaction, inadequate social skills, and poor social support? On the other hand, because loneliness is in the mind of the sufferer, it is perhaps surprising that we would expect changes in objective social circumstances to be sufficient to alleviate loneliness in all its sufferers. Masi provides a quantitative review of strategies employed to alleviate loneliness to show that interventions to date have been only modestly successful in reducing feelings of loneliness, attesting to the challenge of effectively addressing the problem of ruptured social connections.

Invisibility should not thwart attempts to alleviate distress, however. Biological causes of disease were no more visible or evident in the 18th century than psychological causes are today. Yet significant scientific advances during the 19th and 20th centuries completely revolutionized medical practice, life expectancy, and quality of life. Farr Curlin is less interested in the invisible causes of disease than in the primordial need for social connection that John Cacioppo introduced and that Curlin regards as a preexistent condition for medicine. If science can be viewed as a cognitive system that steps us back so that we can deal more objectively and effectively with another person's distress, then religion can be viewed as a cognitive system that steps us forward to connect and care for others. Curlin argues that the practice of medicine requires a balance of these forces, and that the resulting tension between the two produces better care for the patient than does the practice of medicine using either alone.

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Chapter 15[15]

Social Brain, Spiritual Medicine?

No one ever asks what *science* has to do with medicine any more than they ask what books have to do with education or what tools have to do with carpentry. Before the middle of the 19th century, there was almost nothing that physicians, however well intended, could do to actually restore health to the ill. Modern science changed that. Over the past century and a half, dramatic improvements in health outcomes have been wrought through the application of sterile surgery techniques, specialized hospital care, public health measures to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, antibiotics to treat those diseases, and myriad subsequent technologies. All of these have been undergirded by the discoveries of biomedical science.

As a result, the life expectancy in developed nations has doubled. People live not only longer but with much less disability. Diseases that formerly disfigured and killed, such as smallpox and polio, have been almost completely eradicated. Epidemics of malaria, yellow fever, measles and diphtheria have been restrained. Injuries from war or other traumatic events, which in earlier periods led predictably to death or profound disability, now can be ameliorated using sophisticated surgical reconstruction techniques, advanced prostheses, and intensive rehabilitation. Medical science already has accomplished an extraordinary amount in alleviating human illness and forestalling death, and there is good reason to expect further progress. Yet, for all that science has made possible, medicine is animated by other, less tangible, forces.

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[15] The lead author is Farr A. Curlin, M.D., a hospice and palliative care physician, researcher, and medical ethicist at the University of Chicago. His empirical research charts the influence of physicians' moral traditions and commitments, both religious and secular, on physicians' clinical practices. As an ethicist he addresses questions regarding whether and in what ways physicians' religious commitments ought to shape their clinical practices in our plural democracy. Curlin and colleagues have authored numerous manuscripts published in the medicine and bioethics literatures, including a *New England Journal of Medicine* paper titled, “Religion, Conscience and Controversial Clinical Practices.” As founding Director of the Program on Medicine and Religion at the University of Chicago, Dr. Curlin is working with colleagues from the Pritzker School of Medicine and the University of Chicago Divinity School to foster inquiry into and public discourse regarding the intersections of religion and the practice of medicine.

In the world of contemporary medicine, science is front and center, and for good reason. Science provides modern medicine with extraordinary diagnostic and therapeutic capacities that can be employed to care for patients. Yet there is more to medicine than science can know. Science cannot provide visions to animate care of the sick, moral frameworks to guide the application of medical technology, or practices that nurture and extend our sociobiological capacity to care for others. For these medicine turns to religious and secular moral traditions and practices. This essay examines how religious concepts are implicit and operative in practices of medicine and in the formation of fully human physicians. By attending to these concepts, we may gain a richer understanding of the way self-conscious human practices like medicine both depend on and extend our unique, human, biopsychosocial capacities.

To give a robust account for the practice of medicine, one must explain why sick and debilitated strangers are worthy of attention and care, and how the medical arts contribute to human flourishing. For some Americans, such accounts begin in secular moral tradition, but for most they begin in religion; nine out of ten Americans endorse a religious affiliation[1]. Either way, medicine looks beyond science to find a vision that animates care of the sick, a moral framework that guides the application of medical technology, and practices that nurture and extend the human capacity to care for patients as persons rather than as mere objects. In this sense, even though religious concepts are rarely made explicit in public and professional discourse about medicine, they are everywhere implicit and operative, and necessarily so.

Why care for the sick?

Humans in all cultures are moved to care for the sick. The question is why? The concept of the social brain provides the beginning of an answer. The peculiar human need and capacity for constructive, complex and meaningful relationships seems to involve neurological structures and functions that also facilitate attending to the sick. For example, Epley describes the human capacity to pay attention to our own mindedness and the mindedness of others. We are not only conscious of ourselves, but we are conscious of others being conscious of *them*selves and of us. This capacity allows us to be mindful of others' bodily suffering and mindful of their consciousness of our relation to them in that suffering. To mindfulness is added the capacity to empathize. Decety describes a neurological structure through which the sight of pain in another person triggers a response in our own brains that mirrors (albeit at a level attenuated by training and other contextual factors) the response we would have if we were suffering the pain ourselves. These features of the human brain allow us to pay attention to and to some extent share in the suffering of others—capacities that are psychological building blocks for caring for the sick.

Yet to explain medicine strictly on the basis of empirical science, one must solve a particularly thorny version of the more general problem of explaining altruistic human behavior. Decety notes, "The emergence of altruism, of empathizing with and caring for those who are not kin, is … not easily explained within the framework of neo-Darwinian theories of natural selection." Indeed one can scarcely imagine a practice less conducive to the reproductive fitness of a population than spending enormous resources caring for the sick, the deformed, the weak, and the aged. Natural selection and the physician would seem to be at cross-purposes: one works to eliminate the sickly, the other to save them from elimination. On this account, medicine appears to be the sort of dead end into which the evolutionary process sometimes blindly drifts.

Cacioppo, however, argues that altruistic behaviors can be explained within evolutionary theory by paying attention to inclusive fitness and the multiple levels of selective pressure:

> …for species born to a period of utter dependency [e.g., humans], the genes that find their way into the gene pool are not defined solely or even mostly by likelihood that an organism will reproduce but by the likelihood that the offspring of the parent will live long enough to

> reproduce… one consequence is that selfish genes evolved through individual-level selection processes to promote social preferences and group processes, including reciprocal social behaviors, that can extend beyond kin relationships

The concept of inclusive fitness helps to explain why humans care for the young when they are sick, and even why they care for those who when healthy are able to contribute to caring for the young. In addition, it may be that hunter-gatherers were more likely to survive and reproduce when they cared for a wounded or sickened member of the clan—thereby establishing an expectation of reciprocity that would contribute to social cohesion, collective effort, and defense of other group members. These provide at least the rudiments of an evolutionary rationale for the practice of medicine.

Yet, medicine does not involve caring merely (or even primarily) for the young, much less for those who are most genetically fit. Rather, medicine in large measure involves caring for those who either have no capacity to contribute to the gene pool because they are aged and otherwise infertile, or whose contributions to that pool will reduce population fitness because they are genetically predisposed to sickness and disability. Concern about the latter led Francis Galton and many of his American and European contemporaries to embrace social Darwinism and to champion efforts to keep the diminished and infirm from reproducing. In the United States, the eugenics movement was memorialized in the infamous words of Supreme Court justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, who justified the constitutionality of the forced sterilization of mentally 'unfit' women in the case of Buck v. Bell by writing, "Three generations of imbeciles are enough." Sterilization rates under eugenic laws in the United States increased following this ruling until the Skinner v. Oklahoma case in 1942, after which point they declined.

The practice of medicine expresses more than a straightforward social instinct for protecting the young. To borrow from Browning, it may be that medicine builds on and extends the dynamic of inclusive fitness much like in Catholic moral theology caritas (love) builds on and extends eros (desire). Browning writes, "[Aquinas] held – and Christianity has always taught – that Christian love includes more than kin altruism and the care of our familial offspring; it must include the love of neighbor, stranger, and enemy, even to the point of self-sacrifice." The theological concept of God as creator and Father of all "made it possible for Christians to build on yet analogically generalize their kin altruism to all children of God, even those beyond the immediate family, their own children and their own kin." Even those beyond the reasonable hope of reproducing or helping others to reproduce.

Notably, the self-conscious commitments that animate medicine do not include promoting population fitness or ensuring survival of offspring to the point of reproduction. Rather, physicians discipline themselves to practices that make possible the commitment of medicine: to preserve and restore the health of patients, notwithstanding patients' other characteristics. Religions ground this care for the sick in sacred and transcendent obligations to God and neighbor, and it is not incidental that the hospital began when Christian monastic communities enfolded the care of the sick into a communal life of liturgy and prayer. This is not to say that the substantively irreligious lack proper motivation to practice medicine. It is to say that an animating vision for medicine as a good and worthy activity seems to require moral concepts that science alone does not provide.

How should medical science be deployed?

Medicine is not only animated by something like a religious vision; it also requires a thick moral framework for its ongoing *direction*. To know how best to care for patients, we need to know something about what human flourishing entails and how medicine can contribute to it. Medical science is less helpful here than one might hope.

Science facilitates the sort of religious humanism that Browning encourages, because it helps us better understand the empirical world and therefore helps all moral communities refine their efforts to bring about human flourishing. Science elucidates a range of technical possibilities and provides information about what we can reasonably expect as the consequence of choosing one course over another. Yet, even the successes of medical science highlight its limits. As medical science generates technologies that can be put to ever-wider uses, it exposes disagreements about which of those uses are worthwhile. Although medicine proceeds in scientific ways in the care of patients, it does so in pursuit of goals that science cannot set. These goals come from moral traditions and cultures, religious or otherwise.

In the same way that the influence of a dominant culture on medical practice is often invisible or taken for granted precisely because of its dominance, so the influence of religious ideas on medical practice is often invisible in those areas where commitments are shared in common among different religions and other moral traditions. For example, we generally take it for granted that mending injuries, treating infections, and removing diseased organs are good things to do. That is because the moral commitments that undergird these practices are shared by virtually all moral communities, religious or otherwise. Moral commitments that are shared by all may not seem ‘moral’ at all. Yet even the idea of sickness implies a norm of and concern for health that are not fully derivable from empirical science.

The influence of religion on medical practice becomes more visible where the commitments of particular traditions diverge from one another or where they diverge from the values of the dominant culture. For example, religious measures have been found consistently to strongly predict physicians’ attitudes regarding ethically controversial practices such as abortion, physician-assisted suicide, withdrawal of life-sustaining therapies, contraception, physician interaction with patients about spiritual concerns and, as we have found, physicians’ ideas about the relationship between religion and health.[2]

Yet overtly controversial issues merely highlight the tips of proverbial icebergs. Disputes about practices such as abortion or physician-assisted suicide concern whether the practices are intrinsically unethical. Much more commonly physicians agree about the range of legitimate clinical strategies, but they disagree about which is to be recommended in a given moment. For example, physicians may agree that the experience of depression can be treated legitimately by antidepressant medications, referral to a psychiatrist, or referral to a counselor whose practice is rooted in a specific religious tradition. Yet our research suggests that the religious characteristics of physicians strongly influence which of these options they would recommend in a given case[3].

Controversies over a particular medical intervention often represent deeper unspoken disagreements that, unfortunately, science cannot settle. For example, controversies over the use of stimulants to manage childhood behavior disorders, or the medicalization of social anxiety, seem to reflect disagreements about more basic questions: What brings human happiness? Which moods and behaviors should be considered normal parts of human experience and which should be considered abnormal? What sorts of suffering should we try to alleviate? What leads to disordered behaviors? What resources (social, psychological, spiritual or otherwise) are best suited to addressing disruptions in individuals' mental and emotional states? How does modern medicine fit into our response to these experiences? Although physicians may not ask or answer these questions explicitly, they implicitly answer them in their responses and recommendations to patients.

So, for all that is hoped for in 'scientific' and 'evidence-based' practice, clinicians must in the end act as practical moral philosophers, making judgments about how best to pursue the goals of medicine for a particular patient in a particular context, all things considered. Among those things to be considered are moral valuations about which religions and other moral traditions have much to say, but about which medical science remains silent.

Caring for the patient as person

So far I have suggested that religions provide a vision that animates care of the sick and a moral framework that guides the application of medical technology. Religions make another contribution by fostering practices that nurture the human capacity to care for patients as persons rather than as mere objects.

Patients commonly complain that their physicians treat them as mere objects or specimens rather than appreciating and attending to them as unique persons. This problem has always plagued the profession. To learn how to heal, the novice physician must learn of patients as representing abstract general types and classes. She must learn about coronary artery disease and hematuria before she can begin to interpret Mrs. Smith's chest discomfort and Mr. Jones's red urine. These abstractions allow knowledge of when and how things happen, and that knowledge guides technological interventions that may bring healing to the body. These abstractions also help doctors objectify their patients' humanity enough to violate social norms that operate in every other social situation, such as asking patients to expose their nakedness in vulnerable positions, or cutting patients apart in hopes of making them whole.

As long as the process does not go too far, scientific detachment serves to make our concern effective. Yet the collective experience of both patients and physicians suggests that such detachment usually does go too far and occurs too easily. As a result physicians treat patients as mere objects and instances of disease; they treat patients as less than the human persons they are.

Physicians, it would seem, are subject to a particular form of the more general psychological challenge of paying attention to other minds. Like all humans, physicians easily ignore the mindfulness of others. This matters, Epley reminds us, "because mindful agents become moral agents worthy of care and compassion." As such, patients who are seen as mindful "evoke empathy and concern for well-being, whereas agents without mindful experience can be treated simply as mindless objects." There are obstacles to recognizing the mindfulness of patients. Illness makes a patient different, or deviant, from human norms, and we tend to pay less attention to the minds of those who are different from ourselves. In addition, "Considering other minds requires some attentional effort. It does not come automatically." Physicians learn to go through the technical motions of caring for the sick until those motions become 'automatic'—that is the mark of a skilled and effective clinician. But paying attention to the mindfulness of patients requires a sustained investment of time and energy that physicians are often unwilling to make.

How could religious practices help? As Luhrmann notes, most people find it very difficult to pay attention to God. To help in this difficult and lifelong task, many religions have developed disciplines of prayer and other practices that call to mind what we tend to forget—including the ideas that motivate genuine human concern for those who suffer. Christians, for example, practice remembering that all people are ultimately united as children of the one creator God, that "the ground is level at the foot of the cross" regardless of one's social status, one's biological fitness or one's reproductive capacity. Epley notes that we are better able to pay attention to what another is thinking or feeling when we are motivated to do so. Christianity seeks to stimulate such motivation by encouraging Christians to meditate on the fact that Jesus comes to us in those who are sick and otherwise suffer[4]. Moreover, it reminds us that we are never alone. As Katherine Tanner details in her chapter, God is always with us. This central theological claim, when remembered in song, prayer, liturgy, reading of Scriptures and other rituals, provides a particular form of what psychologists call "mindful surveillance"—our actions become more "prosocial" (even altruistic) when we are aware of being observed by others. All of these practices depend on and extend the capacities of the social brain. They are also, from the vantage of Christianity, ways in which one may come to receive grace, the unmerited help of God.

Religious practices have therefore at least the potential to encourage and strengthen the human capacity for attending to the mindfulness, and therefore the personhood, of those who are sick and diminished. As Epley suggests, "Making minds visible, and hence more like one's own, enables people to more readily follow the most famous of all ethical dictates—to treat others as you would have others treat you."

Conclusion

Science and religion are invisibly and inextricably intertwined in the practice of medicine. Science has provided modern medicine with extraordinary diagnostic and therapeutic capacities that can be employed to care for patients. Science gives knowledge of the remarkable neurological and psychological features of the social brain that make activities like caring for the sick possible. But science can also depersonalize the patient viewed through the eyes of the physician scientist. Religions (and other moral communities) motivates an attention to the person who is the patient, providing a fuller vision for the worthiness of caring for the sick, and drawing the physician and patient closer together. Religion and moral communities can also provide a framework to guide the application of medical science in that endeavor, and practices that strengthen the human capacity for treating patients as the mindful persons they are. It is the balance of the tensions produced by the forces of science and religion that may hold a key to better medical practice and patient care.

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4 Holy Bible. Matthew 25:40.

Invisible Forces

Farr Curlin meditates on the puzzle of medicine—what is its evolutionary and social function, what draws individual practitioners to it, and what grounds its fundamental values. The values of scientific inquiry lead to treating the objects of inquiries in just that way: as objects. But objectifying patients and their disease would seem to work against the human values of empathy and caring for the weak that also seems to be part and parcel of what medicine is as a practice. Curlin argues that religious values inform and nurture the human side by insisting that there must be a connection between physician and patient, acting as an often unrecognized invisible force that humanizes the practice of medicine.

Religion is neither necessary nor sufficient for an individual to adhere to such values. The question of what it is that grounds the fundamental values that govern our relationships, and how those values are reflected in invisible social, psychological, and biological forces, is central to the work of our network. In a concluding essay, Ronald Thisted reflects on the many threads of investigation and discussion that have made up our conversation, and how they are interwoven into a network of inquiry that sheds light on invisible forces and the social brain.

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Chapter 16[16]

Epilogue

Over the past six years, our network of scholars has engaged in an on-going conversation that we have come to recognize as being centered on unseen forces that shape, and are shaped by, the social nature of human beings. The essays that make up this volume give a hint as to what our conversation has been like, but the linear structure that a book imposes cannot fully evoke the give and take of vigorous debate, the excitement of viewing an old problem from a new perspective, or the satisfaction that comes from sharing the search for knowledge – even when we did not agree on the interpretation of what we discovered in our search.

We deliberately chose to describe our membership as a network rather than a committee, or seminar, or task force, or club, or salon. A network is defined as much by the connections between people as it is by the individual people themselves. Networks can be described pictorially as nodes (points that represent individuals), some of which are connected by edges (lines that represent links between two individuals). In our network, we have focused on the value of the edges, and have held the conviction that much is to be gained by exploring previously untested connections. We started with a set of nodes having only a handful of edges, and we ended with many more edges than nodes.

As a result, our network – and each individual in the network – has been enriched as we have learned more about, and more from, perspectives that initially were unfamiliar to each of us, the end result being that our whole is decidedly greater than the sum of our parts. This illustrates a recurrent theme in the book, that of emergent phenomena—characteristics that can be ascribed to entities at a higher level of organization that, without conscious design or intent, seem to arise from behaviors and interactions at a lower level of organization. How this can come about is a puzzle, but it is a puzzle that is amenable to thoughtful investigation, both scientific and philosophical. What forces are at play, we might ask, that makes such a collection cohesive? Just what chemistry can transform a collection of individuals into something both more than and different from what in aggregate they bring to the table? We seek to understand more fully the bonds of marriage, family, friendship, or membership—invisible forces that bind and simultaneously transform the underlying nature of their constituents no less than chemical bonds transform atoms of hydrogen and oxygen into water.

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[16] The lead author is Ronald Thisted, Ph.D., a Professor in the Departments of Health Studies, Statistics, and Anesthesia & Critical Care at the University of Chicago, where he currently chairs the Department of Health Studies. Trained in philosophy and mathematics at Pomona College and in statistics at Stanford University, his interests include the nature of argument and evidence, particularly in the context of health, disease, and medical treatment. He has published articles on topics ranging from treatment for back pain to computational mathematics, and from social determinants of health to the size of Shakespeare's vocabulary. He is a Fellow of the American Statistical Association, and a Fellow of the American Academy for the Advancement of Science.

The question of how we come to know—or to claim that we know—things, is left unexamined all too often. The similarities and differences in modes of argument across disciplines, and the variations in what counts for evidence supporting or refuting a position within and across disciplines can be illuminating. Statistics, and statistical argument, provide a rich framework for thinking about such issues as measurement, learning, uncertainty, variation, and experiment. Statistical principles provide a framework for disciplined investigation, for communication about the extent of and limitations to the information at hand, and for combining information from different sources. Although there is enormous variability between individuals, there are also commonalities to their experience that transcend their differences. As a species and as individuals, we rely on these common threads, even when they are invisible to us.

Our origin was rooted in distaste for the unproductive and unenlightening shouting matches between proponents of views of science that denigrate religious belief and views of religion that are anti-scientific. We started from the assumption that scholars from the sciences and from religion and philosophy could have fruitful conversations about what is known, what counts for knowledge, what can be observed, and what can be tested through experiment and observation. And we all believe in the value of the scientific method as a means for expanding our knowledge. Internal tension is needed for the structural integrity of buildings and bridges, and that is no less true of social structures such as our network. Through appropriate construction, deep tensions between theology and science (or even between scientific disciplines or theological perspectives) that have the potential to drive us apart can instead be shaped to release creative energy and shared purpose.

Berntson notes that "beliefs and emotions have consequences, both behavioral and physiological." The network starts from the premise that one can learn about such apparently invisible phenomena as beliefs by studying and reasoning about their consequences.

In his essay, Browning advocates starting with a critical hermeneutic phenomenology, a "careful description" of our instruments, our observations, and the stories we use them to tell. Clearly articulating our assumptions and starting points has been of immense value. After doing so for the benefit of colleagues outside our disciplines, those colleagues in turn have helped us become aware of unarticulated assumptions implicit in our approaches or in our experiments. These observations have led in turn to better science and more convincing evidence. Our colleagues in the network have helped each of us to see more facets of the same elephant that individually we are too blind to appreciate fully.

Revising our thinking and our research to take those observations into account has increased the rigor of our thought and broadened the scope of our conclusions. The presence of a rich variety of disciplinary perspectives has helped us to weave the nets of Sir Arthur Eddington's parable more tightly, enabling us to see for the first time some of the "smaller fish" that earlier would have escaped our notice.

Shedding light on invisible forces (a koan)

Invisible forces of culture, connection, and curiosity bind us together and define us as a species that is at once both individual and social. Because both individuality and sociality are fundamental to the human species, we are fundamentally interdependent, connected by invisible, yet powerful, threads. In exploring these threads, we have also been led to questions about how social forces can have effects on individuals, how the meaning that individuals (and groups) apply to particular phenomena or relationships affect both behavior and biology, and how our biology makes social connection possible. We have used the phrase "invisible forces" to describe the mechanisms that account for these effects that we essentially take for granted, and to suggest by analogy that they can be investigated rigorously just as other phenomena, such as gravity or autonomic regulation, that also are not immediately present to our visual or other senses can be studied.

Human minds are unparalleled at discerning patterns in what they see against a background of noise and variation, and they are equally adept at attributing meaning to them. As the essays in this volume demonstrate repeatedly, we readily ascribe patterns we encounter (or seek to encounter) to invisible forces of nature, of God, of kinship, of genes, of culture, of love, of social connection. A common premise underlying the work of the network is that what we know (or what we think we know), and how we come to know it, are social endeavors embedded in a shared view of both the world and how one talks meaningfully about the world. And mindful of our human facility to see patterns (even where none exist!), we are acutely aware that constant rigorous testing of assumptions, methods, and arguments is necessary to make sure that we are not fooling ourselves into seeing only what we hope to see.

Humans have a deep need to create meaning in their interactions with the world and with each other. We also have a deep need for making connections beyond ourselves. The biological structure we call our brain has evolved to reward social connection, just as it rewards the satisfaction of hunger or thirst. The human biology that directs and reflects these human needs is what we have termed the "social brain."

It is worthwhile to reflect on the range of invisible forces that we have considered here. These forces operate at several different levels, from the molecular, to individual bodily functions, to social groups, to societies, to species. They include such disparate ideas as evolutionary selective pressure favoring social connectedness, anthropomorphism, loneliness, social connection, emergent phenomena, connection to a higher being, transcendence, empathy, language as carrier for meaning, belief, collective will, group synchrony, autonomic regulation, and neural resonance. These forces interact with one another, too: loneliness, for instance, acting as an internal signal of the inadequacy of one's bonds of social connection, with consequent effects on health, mediated through autonomic regulation, or the role of belief in mediating scientific objectivity and empathy.

It is tempting to view individuals, both souls and bodies, as arising from lower-level forces within, such as the operation of specialized neurons and regulatory biological processes. And it is tempting to view social structures and the forces that tend to maintain them as arising, perhaps emergently, from the individuals that make up societies. On this view, the social level of organization arises out of the interaction of lower-level entities. But invisible forces operate in both directions; one's degree of social integration or isolation (at the higher level) can have profound influence on one's mental and physical health (at the lower level). Just how these forces operate—in both directions—is one of the main themes of this book.

A recurring theme is the human need for connection. As we have explored this fundamental need, it has become clear that it can be satisfied in part by connections not necessarily to other human persons, but to other *minds*. Since the minds of others are in part of our own construction, connections to a higher being, or to our pets, or even to a transcendent order underlying the world, can fulfill part of what we strive to attain. Indeed, such non-human attachments can share the character of human connection: we can feel valued by our pet (just as we can feel validated in a social relationship), we can have an intimate dyadic relationship with God (just as we can be intimate with a close friend), and we can feel a sense of belonging to the universe (just as we can feel that we belong to social group). This explains how different, even contradictory, notions of a relationship to God, for instance, can lead different people each to find meaning in such a relationship: finding God on the downtown bus versus encountering God in the purposeful unfolding of the natural order.

The ideas of symmetry, complementarity, coordination, and co-regulation also run through several of our essays. Regulation of biological systems is often maintained through paired systems of biological checks and balances; when one system is activated, the other tends to restore equilibrium. For instance, one set of muscles flexes the arm, and an opposing set extends it. We have seen that the sympathetic and parasympathetic components of the autonomic nervous system—the system that makes us breathe and that makes our heart pump—operate in this way, and that chronic stimulation of some systems, like overstretched elastic bands, lose their ability to spring back. The notions of observing a behavior and performing that behavior not only are conceptually similar, they may be rooted in a common set of neurological structures which may, in turn, help us to understand how we can perceive another human being as being *like* us, but *not* us. Anthropomorphism is the belief that other minds mirror our own; this colors the way we perceive the world and the other actors in it, a mechanism that allows us to simulate getting under the skin of the other person.

Happiness and loneliness are perceptions about our place in the world that profoundly affect our physical bodies *and* our social relationships. Religious beliefs, too, can have profound effects on health and physical well-being, working through the same biological mechanisms that in health maintain equilibrium.

Unseen, yet powerful, forces regulate social behavior. Empathy, for instance, contributes to the regulation of social interactions. Synchronous behavior points to a phenomenon that makes the individual feel subsumed by the group, feeling part of a larger, organic whole. These behaviors can be as disparate as "the wave" at a sports stadium or congregational prayer at a church service. Shared feelings of transcendence and belonging can simultaneously lead to greater fitness of the individual and increased cohesion and sustainability of the social organization—another indication of positive selection associated with the social brain.

The notion of resonance with another appears repeatedly through the book. Our connections to others derive in part from being able to see what they see, to hear what they hear, to know what they know, to feel what they feel. Or we have to be able to believe not only that this is possible, but that it happens. The social brain, in which the same regions are activated by our own experience of pain and by our perception of others in pain, makes both aspects possible. There is a close connection between being able to "feel for" another (empathy) and to "see into" another mind (anthropomorphism).

Language has the potential to affect people and groups in part because it is tied to meaning. Language is the medium through which we convey, preserve, and transmit meaning from one individual to another, and from one social generation to another. Language is powerful because it can activate belief, which in turn can activate physical responses. Words can bind; words can terrify; and words can cause physical pain and death. The power of words comes from the meanings they entail about our connections to one another.

Paradox

Our investigation of invisible forces involving the social brain has led us repeatedly to factors that fundamentally conflict. An important invisible force is the respect we pay to the boundary between self and other. Our relationship to it comes into play in conceptualizing loneliness, anthropomorphism, spirituality, group behavior, empathy, and inclusive fitness. When we speak of loneliness, this boundary seems to be an impenetrable barrier. When we speak of empathy or anthropomorphism, however, the self-other boundary is defined by the similarity and congruence of individuals to one another, providing a transparent window through which we perceive and interact with others (who must be like us). And when we speak of group synchrony, the boundary vanishes completely: self and other are one.

Successful engagement with others requires work. It is the work of *attending to* something, and it is work that often is needed to resolve competing forces. Thinking about other minds is a demanding task and requires attentional effort. It is this effort that allows us to manipulate the transparency of the self-other boundary by what we put in through learning, attending, seeking, and projecting. In effect, we can tune the degree of resonance we have with members of different groups. Similarly, consistent attentional effort is also required for the physician to attend to the mindfulness of patients, for the Vineyard church member to experience God as present in one's life, and for another to find connection to an omnipresent yet invisible God who works through the very workings of the world.

What it means to feel a connection to a higher being is a theme that several essays explore. As is evident in these essays, the Network has considered very different, even divergent, pictures of what such connection might entail. These apparent inconsistencies that can be found in these portrayals are rooted in the different aspects of human connections, and each is grounded in a social context. Social connection can be intimate, relational, or collective. For the member of the Vineyard Church, connection with God is an intimate two-way relationship, while in Jonathan Edwards's sermon in the Great Awakening, the connection is relational and involves the coherence (or lack of it) of the individual with God's approval. And the Christian theological view of connection as a higher order can be conceived in terms of one's belonging within a whole that God's constancy makes larger than oneself.

While religion certainly speaks to individual connection to others and to the divine, religious practices can also serve an evolutionary and social function by strengthening the human capacity for attending to the personhood of those who are sick and diminished. The objectivity of medical science all too often leads to an objectification of the patient or, more frequently, the patient's disease. The social brain's capacity to see others as minds rather than objects makes it possible to assign meaning to patients and the ways in which they lack wholeness.

Crescat scientia; vita excolatur

The possibility that religion and science can enrich one other, even as one sets aside truth claims about such matters as the existence of a deity, is by no means obvious. But we have come to see that science can describe what religion does in rigorous ways that benefit religion, and religion can serve a meaning-making function that science itself disclaims. Gilpin notes that rifts between science and religion "have centered on whether one can make scientific sense of the notion of divine mind, purpose, or intention." Our network sidestepped this question from the beginning, focusing instead on related matters such as the *consequences* of believing in such a mind, and of seeing into that mind, for the one doing the divining.

Those are questions amenable to empirical investigation, and it is at that juncture that we can see benefit from our discussions. As Berntson says, "beliefs color the way we perceive the world, they direct and shape our actions, and define our personalities." Studying and debating about how they do so has been gratifying and immensely enjoyable. We have engaged in no theological debate, but have focused on questions about human beings, their beliefs, their behaviors, and how those things affect and are affected by multiple levels of human connection.

How we conceptualize our relationships to persons and things outside our selves has implications for our health and well-being. Specifically, we have seen that viewing our relationships in terms of meaningful connections with other minds can have positive implications for individual – as well as social – health and function. The more that we can learn about those implications, the more our increase in knowledge has the potential to enrich human life.

From: jeffrey epstein [jeevacation@gmail.com]
Sent: 3/3/2011 5:54:10 PM
To: Martin Weinberg Esq[redacted]; Darren Indyke [[redacted]]
Subject: Fwd: From Alexandra Wolfe

Privileged - Redacted

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Peggy Siegal" <[redacted]>
Date: March 2, 2011 3:19:39 PM PST
To: <jeevacation@gmail.com>
Subject: From Alexandra Wolfe

[redacted]

Here are some questions. Thanks again for your help! Would love to talk to him, or travel to meet with him if that would be possible.

-What is he chiefly focusing on now? Is he spending more time on The Jeffrey Epstein Science Foundation? Could he talk about his interest in science and the 2011 grants/conference?
-How has his business been affected? Is there any new direction he's taking it? Does he still have the same clients or new ones? Is it still at $15 billion?
-Did he still work while in prison? How was that arranged? With whom was he working/advising?
-Where is he spending his time now? How has his social life changed from three years ago?
-Is he still close with Ghislaine Maxwell? Someone said she lives with him (but that doesn't sound right)?
-What were friends/colleagues/acquaintances reactions to his conviction?
-What does he think about the sentence he got- was it too lenient or too harsh and why?
-What is his side of the story and have people been supportive?
-Is he continuing the charity initiatives he started with Bill Clinton, etc?

From: Jeffrey Epstein [jeevacation@gmail.com]
Sent: 3/7/2011 7:12:54 PM
To: Jay Lefkowitz [redacted]
Subject: Re: Fw:

Privileged - Redacted

On Mon, Mar 7, 2011 at 11:11 AM, Jay Lefkowitz <[redacted]> wrote:

> ----- Original Message -----
> From: "Wolfe, Alexandra" [redacted]
> Sent: 03/07/2011 02:04 PM EST
> To: Jay Lefkowitz
> Subject: RE:
>
> Dear Mr. Lefkowitz,
>
> Here are the questions I'd like to ask Jeffrey Epstein. Would he be available to answer any of these on the phone or by email? People have told me some of his thoughts on background but I wanted to see if he could tell me or email me anything directly I could use on the record. Also I'd like to run the information I already have by you or him.
>
> Thank you,
> Alexandra
>
> -What is he chiefly focusing on now? Is he spending more time on The Jeffrey Epstein Science Foundation? Could he talk about his interest in science and the 2011 grants/conference?
> -How has his business been affected? Is there any new direction he's taking it? Does he still have the same clients or new ones? Is it still at $15 billion?
> -Did he still work while in prison? How was that arranged? With whom was he working/advising?
> -Where is he spending his time now? How has his social life changed from three years ago?
> -Is he still close with Ghislaine Maxwell?
> -What were friends/colleagues/acquaintances reactions to his conviction?
> -What does he think about the sentence he got- was it too lenient or too harsh and why?
> -What is his side of the story and have people been supportive?
> -Is he continuing the charity initiatives he started with Bill Clinton, etc?
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Jay Lefkowitz [mailto:[redacted]]
> Sent: Mon 3/7/2011 12:18 PM
> To: Wolfe, Alexandra
> Subject:
>
> Dear Ms. Wolfe,

I understand you have some questions about my client,
Jeffrey Epstein. Given that much of the press coverage
surrounding Mr. Epstein has been inaccurate and in some
instances, defamatory, I would like to suggest that you
send me any facutal questions so that I can provide you
with accurate responses.

I am also available to speak with you. My number is
212 446 4970.

Thank you,

Jay

****
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destroy this communication and all copies thereof,

> including all attachments.
> **

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confidential, may be attorney-client privileged, may
constitute inside information, and is intended only for
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From: Jeffrey Epstein [jeevacation@gmail.com]
Sent: 3/8/2011 1:10:38 AM
To: Mike Sitrick [[redacted]]
Subject: Fwd: Fw:

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Jay Lefkowitz** <[redacted]>
Date: Mon, Mar 7, 2011 at 11:11 AM
Subject: Fw:
To: Jeffrey Epstein <jeevacation@gmail.com>, Darren <[redacted]>, Martin Weinberg <[redacted]>

----- Original Message -----
From: "Wolfe, Alexandra" [redacted]]
Sent: 03/07/2011 02:04 PM EST
To: Jay Lefkowitz
Subject: RE:

Dear Mr. Lefkowitz,

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Thank you,
Alexandra

-What is he chiefly focusing on now? Is he spending more time on The Jeffrey Epstein Science Foundation? Could he talk about his interest in science and the 2011 grants/conference?
-How has his business been affected? Is there any new direction he's taking it? Does he still have the same clients or new ones? Is it still at $15 billion?
-Did he still work while in prison? How was that arranged? With whom was he working/advising?
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-What does he think about the sentence he got- was it too lenient or too harsh and why?
-What is his side of the story and have people been supportive?
-Is he continuing the charity initiatives he started with Bill Clinton, etc?

-----Original Message-----

From: Jay Lefkowitz [mailto:[redacted]]
Sent: Mon 3/7/2011 12:18 PM
To: Wolfe, Alexandra
Subject:

Dear Ms. Wolfe,

I understand you have some questions about my client, Jeffrey Epstein. Given that much of the press coverage surrounding Mr. Epstein has been inaccurate and in some instances, defamatory, I would like to suggest that you send me any facutal questions so that I can provide you with accurate responses.

I am also available to speak with you. My number is
[redacted]

Thank you,

Jay

****
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The information contained in this communication is confidential, may be attorney-client privileged, may constitute inside information, and is intended only for the use of the addressee. It is the property of
Jeffrey Epstein
Unauthorized use, disclosure or copying of this communication or any part thereof is strictly prohibited and may be unlawful. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by return e-mail or by e-mail to jeevacation@gmail.com, and destroy this communication and all copies thereof, including all attachments. copyright -all rights reserved

---

From: Jeffrey Epstein [jeevacation@gmail.com]
Sent: 4/4/2011 12:21:13 PM
To: Peggy Siegal [redacted]
Subject: Re: Alexandra Wolf

never

On Mon, Apr 4, 2011 at 8:15 AM, Peggy Siegal <[redacted]> wrote:

> Just read Alex's blog. It's pretty harmless.
>
> Do you know Debbie Bancroft? Why is she giving quotes about you? She is a fat drunk with no money and a bad marriage. She writes or did write a pathetic social column about losers. Did you ever meet her? She is a joke.
> Peg
>
> ----- Original Message -----
> From: Jeffrey Epstein <jeevacation@gmail.com>
> To: Peggy Siegal
> Sent: Sat Apr 02 09:02:02 2011
> Subject:
>
> http://www.thedailybeast.com/blogs-and-stories/2011-04-01/bill-clinton-katie-couric-woody-allen-jeffrey-epsteins-society-friends-close-ranks/2/
>
> --
> **
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From: Lawrence Krauss [redacted]
Sent: 12/11/2017 6:53:37 AM
To: Nancy Portland [redacted]
CC: Lawrence Krauss [redacted]
Subject: Re: URGENT: BuzzFeed News inquiry re allegations of sexual harassment
Attachments: DA866543-7401-4A5A-8E50-FD32E33A50EC.png

Importance: High

a few more minor changes.. one in first line of second paragraph and one misspelling corrected..so you can read this one:

Lawrence M. Krauss
Director, The Origins Project at ASU
Co-Director, Cosmology Initiative
Foundation Professor
School of Earth & Space Exploration and Physics Department
Arizona State University, P.O. Box 871404, Tempe, AZ 85287-1404
Research Office: [redacted], Assistant [redacted]
Origins Office [redacted]
[redacted]
origins.asu.edu | twitter.com/lkrauss1 | krauss.faculty.asu.edu
ASU Origins PROJECT
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

On Dec 10, 2017, at 10:31 PM, Lawrence Krauss [redacted] wrote:

Second Draft:

I appreciate the opportunity to respond to your email. While I am running the risk that you will report my comments, if you do, either out of context, or incompletely, I am responding with an effort to be complete. It is hard to know how to respond to a list of false and/or distorted allegations, along with misleading statements on your part. I treat people I interact with with respect, and I work hard to support and mentor students, colleagues, and members of the general public. I do not sexually harass people. If the purpose of your reporting is to somehow argue that Universities and other institutions are lax in dealing with well known individuals like myself, then in fact the situation is quite the opposite. My high public profile opens me up to more scrutiny at these institutions, not less, and it also opens me up to a host of outside complaints and allegations that other faculty do not receive, each of which the University has to respond to. The fact that I have remained a professor in all Universities with which I have been associated, in good standing, and also an officer or an invited speaker at organizations like CFI, which have strict harassment policies, is a confirmation of the fact that they trust my behavior. I was asked to be an honorary director of CFI, and invited to their last 3 meetings to speak, specifically because, as they have written me after the fact, the attendees universally appreciated my talks, my courtesy, and graciousness in spending time with the attendees. If the purpose of your report is to impugn my integrity or suggest I have a history of harassment, that too is false. As noted in one of your 'miscellaneous facts', as a scientist I try and remain skeptical, and rely on empirical evidence, rather than allegations and innuendo. I also try and judge the facts in context. The fact that Universities and other organizations employ me or have me on their boards, or invite me to meetings is because they value my contributions and my actions.

The items you list are false or distorted. Item 1 refers falsely and inaccurately to a consensual encounter in my hotel room in 2006 where we mutually decided, in a polite discussion in fact, that taking it any further would not be appropriate, and there were respectful and platonic encounters afterwards. There is nothing to comment on in item 3, which involves an anonymous 3rd party claim because I know nothing about it, there are no details provided, and it clearly was not taken seriously enough to result in any university action. Item 4 is confusing. Are you saying that because I decided I didn't want to go out to a bar with a group of attendees that I was harassing them? The second part did not happen. Re incident 5: The 'female companion' in this case is my wife, who can attest to the fact that the claim is false, which is what I wrote at the time in response to the blog in question, causing it to be taken down.

It is worth responding to Item 2 and 6 in more detail, Re item 2: the student in question was interested in science communication, and on dozens of occasions came to me or wrote to me with questions. When she asked about advice for after graduation I DID tell her she was different than the other students in her year. The rest of them were interested in going on to graduate school, but she was interested in science communication so I told her that she might want to take a different path. Since she was the only woman in her year, as I recall, I did ask her on one of these occasions if that made it difficult for her in any way. I asked, because as a faculty member I was interested in knowing what we could do, if necessary to encourage more women to go into physics, and also because as someone she had asked for career advice from I wanted to know if that made a difference to her. Re asking her for dinner.. I have gone back over emails from that period. I have numerous requests from her asking me to go for coffee to talk, which I usually had to turn down because I was busy, and on several occasions sh specifically asked me to have coffee with her off campus to talk, and I politely declined. I did let her accompany me off campus one time to watch me do a BBC interview because she specifically requested it. I did and do have coffee and meals with students on campus, and I see nothing wrong with this. I try to treat even students as respected colleagues if possible. I was shocked when I later learned of the complaint she was apparently asked to lodge to the University, not least because there was no inappropriate interaction and also because, well after the dates you listed on which she was apparently offended, she continued to email me with joking questions or comments. Also, at a later AAAS conference, again in 2008, for which she had asked, and for which I had written her a letter of recommendation to attend, my wife and I gave her a lift in our taxi well out out of our way in order to drop her off at her hotel, and I note in an email response to her email about the conference, agin in 2008, I expressed that I would pass her regards along to my wife and vice versa. When the University later informed me of the complaint I was shocked and concerned. When I spoke to the human resources person, including relating my concerns and providing the emails in question, I was told that no formal complaint of sexual harassment was deemed at that time to be called for, and that the young woman in question had agreed to that. By that time I learned of the complaint I had already announced my intentions to leave Case to accept an offer at ASU—a very difficult decision for me because of my long-standing attachment to the University, and the excellent relations I had with my colleagues there, both among the faculty and among the administration. Because I was already in Arizona at the time I was asked not to have any further interaction with the student I agreed to that request, both to respect her sensitivities and also because it was basically moot because I was not on campus. I was also told that because it was being handled informally, that (a) it should remain confidential, which I, at least abided by, and (b) if no further complaints were lodged in that case, that the University would remove the complaint from my record after 5 years, which makes me surprised that someone violated that written agreement with you.

Re item 6: You report on ASU's response to item #6 , without including the fact that the University specifically stated there were never any allegations of sexual misconduct or harassment by me at the University, and morever the outside complaints were in fact related specifically to your item #6. Further you neglect to mention that this complaint was by an anonymous third party, not the individual who was allegedly harassed, who never lodged a complaint, and that no specific evidence was provided of the alleged transgression. I was surprised and dismayed that both ASU and ANU launched investigations on the basis of this but was told by both Universities that because of my high profile even such unsubstantiated third party complaints at private events unrelated to the University would be investigated. The complaint was investigated throughly by both ASU and ANU and both came to the conclusion that it was not credible and no university policies had been violated. . In addition ANU's investigation, which took a full month found significant inconsistencies in the allegation, suggesting distortion and fabrication, I will quote from the ANU report. The initial complaint, which in fact resulted in a temporary suspension of my position at ANU, until it was dismissed, outlined the claim you made in the words you quoted in your note to me, but it also stated

"It is the University's understanding that a complaint was lodged directly to the conference organisers at the time of the incident."

After the month-long investigation, during which I was told I was not to interact with anyone on campus (again moot because I was a hemisphere removed) the final report absolved me of any wrongdoing, and indicated information inconsistent with the original claim and apparent later claims as follows in the report, from which I quote:

"The allegations were made by an observer to the incident.
- The complaint did not identify, nor disclose the identity of the conference attendee who was allegedly touched in an unwelcome manner.
- The conference attendee who took the 'selfie' photo did not lodge a formal complaint to the conference organisers at the time of the incident (November 2016).
- The conference attendee who witnessed the incident, did not lodge a formal complaint to the conference organisers at the time of the incident (November 2016).
The photo submitted as part of the complaint does not provide evidence of any physical contact.
- The complainant alleged that a photo exists, showing your hand on the breast of the conference attendee who took the 'selfie' photo. This photo was not made available to the Australian National University, although it was requested in the course of the investigation."

(And for the record I often put my hand up in front of a camera if there is a flash, as I specifically request selfies not to include flashes, so that I don't end up with a series bright spots in front of my eyes for the next half hour)

What makes this particular type of allegation so repugnant is that I get asked for literally thousands of selfies, and when people come up to me they are vulnerable, often shaking, and sometimes overly aggressive. I am particularly proud of the way I attempt to make all people feel at ease, and respected, rather than humiliated. Thus, this false claim strikes at the heart of what I am about, which is to acknowledge fans in a way that makes them feel appreciated. As I understand you had a reporter watching me sign books and take selfies at the CFI conference in Las Vegas this year, that behavior is what they will have witnessed. Moreover, I am proud of the interactions I have had at both Case and ASU, with students, colleagues and staff of all genders and ethnicities. I have worked hard to support them, mentor them, and treat them with respect. I treat others as responsible adults, and I expect to be treated equally.

Lawrence M. Krauss
Director, The Origins Project at ASU
Co-Director, Cosmology Initiative
Foundation Professor
School of Earth & Space Exploration and Physics Department
Arizona State University, P.O. Box 871404, Tempe, AZ 85287-1404
Research Office:[redacted], Assistant [redacted]
Origins Office [redacted]
[redacted]
origins.asu.edu | **twitter.com/lkrauss1** | **krauss.faculty.asu.edu**

<DA866543-7401-4A5A-8E50-FD32E33A50EC.png>

On Dec 10, 2017, at 9:53 PM, Lawrence Krauss [redacted] wrote:

First draft:

It is hard to know how to respond to a list of false and/or distorted allegations, along with misleading statements on your part. Needless to say, I treat people I interact with with respect, and I work hard to support and mentor students, colleagues, and members of the general public. I do not sexually harass people. If the purpose of your reporting is to somehow argue that that Universities and other institutions are lax in dealing with well known individuals like myself, then in fact the situation is quite the opposite. My high public profile opens me up to more scrutiny at these institutions, not less, and it also opens me up to a host of outside complaints and allegations that other faculty do not receive, each of which the University has to respond to. The fact that I have remained a professor in all Universities with which I have been associated, in good standing, and also an officer or an invited speaker at organizations like CFI, which have strict harassment policies, is a confirmation of the fact that they trust my behavior. I was asked to be an honorary director of CFI, and invited to their last 3 meetings to speak, specifically because, as they have written me after the fact, the attendees universally appreciated my talks, my courtesy, and graciousness in spending time with the attendees. If the purpose of your report is to impugn my integrity or suggest I have a history of harassment, that too is false. As noted in one of your 'miscellaneous facts', as a scientist I try and remain skeptical, and rely on empirical evidence, rather than allegations and innuendo. I also try and judge the facts in context. The fact that Universities and other organizations employ me or have me on their boards, or invite me to meetings is because they value my contributions and my actions.

Your specific allegations are false or distorted. Item 1 refers to a consensual encounter in my hotel room in 2006 where we mutually decided, in a polite discussion in fact, that taking it any further would not be appropriate, and had respectful encounters afterwards. I cannot comment on item 3, which involves an anonymous 3rd party claim, because I know nothing about it, and it was not taken seriously enough to result in any university action. Item 4 is confusing. Are you saying that because I decided I didn't want to go out to a bar with a group of attendees that I was harassing them? The second part is false. I don't do that. Re incident 5: The 'female companion' in this case is my wife, who can attest to the fact that the claim is false, which is what I wrote in response to the blog in question, causing it to be taken down.

It is worthwhile responding to Item 2 and 6 in more detail,

Re item 2: the student in question was interested in science communication, and on dozens of occasions came to me or wrote to me with questions. When she asked about advice for after graduation I DID tell her she was different than the other students in her year. The rest of them were interested in going on to graduate school, but she was interested in science communication so I told her that she might want to take a different path. Since she was the only woman in her year, as I recall, I did ask her on one of these occasions if that made it difficult for her in any way. I asked, because as a faculty member I was interested, and also because as someone she had asked for career advice from I wanted to know if that made a difference to her. Re asking her for dinner.. I have gone back over emails from that period. I have numerous requests from her to go for coffee to talk, which I usually had to turn down because I was busy, including several occasions where she asked me to have coffee with her off campus to talk, and I politely declined. I did let her accompany me off campus one time to watch me do a BBC interview because she specifically requested it. I did and do have coffee and meals with students on campus, and I see nothing wrong with this. I was shocked when I later learned of her complaint, not least because there was no inappropriate interaction and also because well after the date on which she is said to have been offended, she continued to email me with joking questions or comments, and at a AAAS conference in 2008, for which she had asked, and for which I had written her a letter of recommendation to attend, my wife and I gave her a lift well out out of our way to drop her off at her hotel, and I note in an email response to her email about the conference, agin in 2008, I expressed that I would pass her regards along to my wife and vice versa. When the University informed me of the complaint I was shocked and concerned. When I spoke to the human resources person, including relating my concerns and providing the emails in question, I was told that no formal complaint of sexual harassment was deemed to be warranted in this case, and that the young woman in question had agreed to that. By that time I learned of the complaint I had already announced my intentions to leave Case to accept an offer at ASU—a very difficult decision for me because of my long-standing attachment to the University, and the excellent relations I had with my colleagues there, both among the faculty and among the administration. Because I was already in Arizona at the time I was asked not to have any further interaction with the student I agreed to that request because it was basically moot. I was also told that because it was being handled informally, that (a) it should remain confidential, which I, at least abided by, and (b) if no further complaints were lodged in that case, that the University would remove the allegation from my record after 5 years, which makes me surprised that someone violated that written agreement with you.

Re item 6: You report on ASU's response to item #6 , without including the fact that the University specifically stated there were never any allegations of sexual misconduct or harassment by me at the University, and the outside complaints were in fact related specifically to your item #6. Further you neglect to mention that this complaint was by an anonymous third party, not the individual who was allegedly harassed, who never lodged a complain, and that no specific evidence was provided of the alleged transgression. I was surprised and dismayed that both ASU and ANU launched investigations on the basis of this but was told by both Universities that because of my high profile even such unsubstantiated third party complaints at private events unrelated to the University would be investigated. The complaint was investigated throughly by both ASU and ANU and both came to the conclusion that it was not credible and no university policies had been violated. . In addition ANU's investigation, which took a full month found significant inconsistencies in the allegation, suggesting distortion and fabrication, I will quote from the ANU report. The initial complaint, which in fact resulted in a temporary suspension by ANU outlined the claim you made in the words you quoted in your note to me, along with the statement made in the complaint that

"It is the University's understanding that a complaint was lodged directly to the conference organisers at the time of the incident."

After the investigation, the final report absolved me of any wrongdoing, and indicated information inconsistent with the original claim and apparent later claims as follows:

"The allegations were made by an observer to the incident.
- The complaint did not identify, nor disclose the identity of the conference attendee who was allegedly touched in an unwelcome manner.
- The conference attendee who took the 'selfie' photo did not lodge a formal complaint to the conference organisers at the time of the incident (November 2016).
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(And for the record I often put my hand up in front of a camera if there is a flash, as I specifically request selfies not to include flashes, so that I don't end up with a series bright spots in front of my eyes for the next half hour)

What makes this particular type of allegation so repugnant is that I get asked for literally thousands of selfies, and when people come up to me they are vulnerable, often shaking, and sometimes overly aggressive. I am particularly proud of the way I attempt to make all people feel at ease, and respected, rather than humiliated. Thus, this false claim strikes at the heart of what I am about, which is to acknowledge fans in a way that makes them feel appreciated. As I understand you had a reporter watching me sign books and take selfies at the CFI conference in Las Vegas this year, that behavior is what they will have witnessed. Moreover, I am proud of the interactions I have had at both Case and ASU, with students, colleagues and staff. I have had numerous female graduate students, postdocs, employees, and colleagues, and as ASU attested to you, none of these have ever complained of harassment. Quite the contrary in fact, as I have worked hard to support them, mentor them, and treat them with respect. I treat others as responsible adults, and I expect to be treated equally.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Peter Aldhous [redacted]
Subject: URGENT: BuzzFeed News inquiry re allegations of sexual harassment
Date: December 10, 2017 at 5:12:27 PM PST
To:[redacted], [redacted]

Dr. Krauss:

As you know, I'm a reporter for BuzzFeed News who has been investigating sexual misconduct allegations against you. As we've already discussed by email, I'd very much like to interview you about these allegations in detail.

In particular, you stated in an email sent on Nov 13 that two universities had investigated an incident (# 6 below). You claimed that "both Universities independently concluded that the report was unsubstantiated and fabricated with malicious intent." We are not aware that either university concluded fabrication or malicious intent, so if you have evidence to support this assertion, we would like to see and discuss it.

The story concerns your actions towards students while a professor of physics at Case Western Reserve University, as well as your conduct in non-academic settings as a prominent figure in the skeptics movement. I am reporting this story along with two of my colleagues on the science desk, Azeen Ghorayshi and Virginia Hughes.

Our story is about several allegations of sexual misconduct dating from 2006 to 2016 (see full details below). Our reporting also goes into how the various institutions you have been affiliated with — Case Western, Arizona State University, the Australian National University, the New College of the Humanities, and the Center for Inquiry, for which you serve as an honorary member of the board of directors — have handled complaints and concerns about your behavior during this time.

Our story is corroborated by emails, university documents, official complaints, testimony from victims and eyewitnesses, and interviews with more than two dozen of your current and former academic colleagues, students, and peers in the skeptics movement.

I wanted to offer you the opportunity to comment and/or respond to the main facts we plan to publish. If you wish to comment on any of the below findings, we need to hear from you as soon as possible. **We are planning on publishing our story Tuesday morning, Eastern US Time.**

Based on our reporting, this is what we plan to publish:

Incident 1:

- In November of 2006, at an event launching the new Center for Inquiry in Washington D.C., you met a volunteer for CFI D.C.
- At the event, you asked for her business card. Later, you followed her as she was leaving and asked her if she was "of age."
- Later, you emailed her to invite her to dinner.
- You planned to dine with her in the restaurant at the Washington D.C. hotel where you were staying.
- You told her to come up to your room first because you needed to finish some work.
- In your hotel room, you seemed in no rush to leave. You ordered a cheese plate, and later champagne, despite her suggestion that you go down to dinner.
- You then made a comment about her eye makeup, getting very close to her face.
- You then lifted her by her arms, and pushed her onto the bed beneath you, forcibly kissing her and trying to pull down the crotch of her tights.
- She struggled to push you off her.
- You said, "When I was in college I could never get a girl that looked like you."
- When you pulled out a condom, she got out from under you. She said "I have to go," and rushed out of the room.

Incident 2:

- In an incident that occurred in fall of 2007 while you were a physics professor at Case Western Reserve University, a student tried to talk to you about her plans after graduation. You mentioned to her how tough it must be to have all the other physics majors asking her out on dates.
- In a second incident in December of 2007, while you were still at Case Western, the same student visited your office to interview you for a student science journal. You closed the door behind her, and ignored the questions she had prepared. Then you made a casual comment about taking her out for dinner.
- Later, in a regular column for the school paper, she described her experiences with you, without mentioning you by name. "There was even one particular creep of a professor who once told me he thought differently of me compared to other students and asked me to dinner: a situation so disturbing that it left me upset for weeks afterward," she wrote.

- She was then approached by a dean at the university, who suspected that she was referring to you, based on a previously reported incident with another student. He encouraged her to make a complaint, and she did.
- University investigators interviewed both you and the student.
- On September 4, 2008, Susan Nickel-Schindewolf, the university's associate vice president for student affairs, wrote to the student, telling her that the investigation was complete. She wrote that you had been told: "This type of behavior could constitute sexual harassment in violation of the university's sexual harassment policy."
- The letter also stated that you were prohibited from making contact with the student as long as she remained at Case.
- The letter also stated that you are required to get approval from the dean or the chair of the physics department before setting foot on the campus again.
- The letter also stated, "Dr. Krauss expressed regret about having a negative impact on you, and also his willingness to use this complaint as an opportunity to reflect and improve on his future interactions with students."
- By then, you had already left Case, taking up your current position at Arizona State University the month before.
- "The opportunities being offered at ASU are simply too great to turn down at this stage in my career," you told Case colleagues, in an email announcing your departure on April 16, 2008.

Incident 3:

- A former Case Western physics department administrator confirmed that she had reported a previous incident involving a student who had confided in her about your inappropriate behavior towards her.

Incident 4:

- You met a student from another university, an atheist activist, in March 2008 at the American Atheists Convention in Minneapolis. She wanted to expand the atheist group she ran at the midwestern university she was attending, and hoped to convince you to come and speak. You initially seemed enthusiastic.
- During the convention, attendees including you and Richard Dawkins went for dinner with the student and volunteers for Dawkins' foundation.
- Afterwards, the student invited you to join the volunteers for a drink.
- You asked her to come get you in your hotel room. She was wary of your intentions, and so brought a male friend with her. Opening the door to find them both there, you informed her you had decided not to go.
- You met this student again at the American Atheists Convention in Des Moines, Iowa, in April 2011.
- You pulled over a chair for her in the bar, and then started running your hand up her leg under the table.
- She tried to shift her body away from you, and you persisted in putting your hand on her leg. She crossed her legs, and you kept trying. Then she turned her entire body away.

Incident 5:

- This incident allegedly occurred on in May 2011 on a CFI cruise. We understand that CFI staff were informed that you had propositioned a female cruise-goer, who rejected an invitation to join you and your female companion for sex in your cabin.
- At least two CFI staffers were sufficiently concerned about reports of your behavior that they urged CFI's president not to invite you on a 2014 cruise of the Galápagos Islands. You were invited on that cruise, however.

Incident 6:

- During a visit to Melbourne, Australia, in November 2016, you were accused of sexual misconduct once again.
- The incident happened at a dinner held at the Melbourne Zoo as part of the Australian Skeptics National Convention, where you were a featured speaker.
- With conference delegates chatting over drinks, a woman asked you for a celebrity selfie.
- As the woman held out her phone to take the picture, you reached over her shoulder and grabbed her right breast.
- She immediately reacted, bodychecking you and spinning around. “Don’t do that,” she said.
- BuzzFeed News has seen the complaint made by another woman to ASU, ANU, and the New College of the Humanities in London, including the selfie, her face obscured to conceal her identity. It shows your hand in motion as a blur in front of her shoulder, apparently moving toward her chest. Two other eyewitnesses have confirmed the complainant’s account of what happened.
- In April 2017, the complainant described the incident on her blog. After hearing more about your reputation for inappropriate behavior from blog readers, she decided to file a complaint about the Nov. 2016 incident.
- On July 16, she filed formal complaints with Arizona State University, and with the Australian National University in Canberra and the New College of the Humanities in London, where you have visiting appointments.
- Both Arizona State and the Australian National University told her they would look into the matter. But neither university found against you.
- “Based on the material available to the University, we do not have sufficient evidence to substantiate the allegations,” Kiaran Kirk, dean of the College of Science at the Australian National University, wrote to her.
- Erin Ellison, who heads Arizona State’s Office of Equity & Inclusion, wrote to her explaining that an inquiry “did not find a violation of university policy.”
- In October, Arizona State denied a request from BuzzFeed News for documents relating to complaints of sexual harassment against you. However, Cynthia Jewett, the university’s senior associate general counsel, noted that **two** individuals, neither affiliated with the university, had complained about you. “The University did not find either communication to state a credible allegation,” Jewett wrote.

Miscellaneous facts:

- In 2008, you founded the Origins Project at Arizona State University in Tempe, a multidisciplinary effort to understand the origins of the universe, life, and social systems. You have led that effort ever since.
- Thanks to best-selling books like *The Physics of Star Trek* and *A Universe From Nothing*, frequent essays in publications including the New Yorker and the New York Times, and the documentary you made with biologist Richard Dawkins, called *The Unbelievers*, you are celebrated as one of America’s leading public intellectuals.
- You served on the science policy committee for Barack Obama’s 2008 presidential campaign and are a vocal critic of President Donald Trump.
- You also make regular public appearances across the world, often at gatherings of skeptics and atheists.
- At CSICon in Las Vegas in October, a few dozen fans paid $500 per head to attend a VIP luncheon with you and Dawkins.
- Many more lined up to get you to sign their copy of your latest book, *The Greatest Story Ever Told — So Far*.
- Online, people can buy T-shirts emblazoned “Lawrence Krauss for President.”
- In talks and interviews, you have argued that our universe arose without divine intervention, that religion drives xenophobia, and that our brains are hardwired to believe.

- You have stated that science provides answers to many of life's biggest questions, and can even fix great societal injustices.
- Earlier this year, at a Q&A event to promote your new book, the conversation came around to the dearth of women and minorities in science. "Science itself overcomes misogyny and prejudice and bias," you said. "It's built in: Questioning yourself, always questioning results, questioning others, relying on empirical evidence."
- You have clashed with some skeptics over your defense of Jeffrey Epstein, a billionaire financier who in 2008 was convicted for soliciting prostitution from underage girls, and spent 13 months in a Florida jail.
- Through his private foundation, Epstein has funded the work of several prominent scientists. He has provided funding for your Origins Project, supporting lectureship and scholarship programs, most recently pledging $100,000 in 2014.
- In April 2011, you told the Daily Beast: "As a scientist I always judge things on empirical evidence and he always has women ages 19 to 23 around him, but I've never seen anything else, so as a scientist, my presumption is that whatever the problems were I would believe him over other people."
- In a blog comment about the Epstein controversy, you wrote: "I remain skeptical, and I support a man whose character I believe I know...If you want to condemn me for that, so be it."
- You were made an honorary member of CFI's board of directors in December 2011.
- A blog post published in August 2013 described incidents #1 and #4, naming you. Another post, published at around the same time, described incident #5.
- The first post was edited to remove your name after you had commented that the allegations of assault were "potentially illegal." The second post was quickly taken down.

Again, if you wish to comment on or clarify any of these points, please get in touch with us as soon as possible. If I do not respond immediately it is because I am on another call, so please leave the best phone number to reach you.

Thanks,
Peter Aldhous
[redacted]

From: Lawrence Krauss [redacted]
Sent: 12/11/2017 3:22:48 PM
To: jeffrey E. [jeevacation@gmail.com]
CC: Lawrence Krauss [redacted]
Subject: Re: URGENT: BuzzFeed News inquiry re allegations of sexual harassment
Attachments: image002.png

Importance: High

Thanks.. I need to get this or something to them quickly. I do feel the need to respond to each of their claims otherwise they would say I don't deny them.. Will include a short preamble. I am going to cc the letter to the Buzzfeed lawyers. I figure I will see whether the buzzfeed story gets any traction at all, or appears before putting on my web site, or tweeting and facebooking it.

LMK

On Dec 11, 2017, at 4:18 AM, jeffrey E. <jeevacation@gmail.com> wrote:

normaly thier strategy will be to take back your defense to the accusers. and attack each one. if they find you are right they will leave out. and only go with the conflicted. I think you should include short concise cover letter. that you would like published in it entirety. it can refence your attacjment that you will put on your web site? . that goes into more details but in general , these are false. they were either investigated and found lacking or ignored. etc. often they throw out the near publishing date merely to get you to ansser.

On Mon, Dec 11, 2017 at 7:53 AM, Lawrence Krauss [redacted] wrote:

> a few more minor changes.. one in first line of second paragraph and one misspelling corrected..so you can read this one:
>
> **Lawrence M. Krauss**
> **Director, The Origins Project at ASU**
> **Co-Director, Cosmology Initiative**
> **Foundation Professor**
> School of Earth & Space Exploration and Physics Department
> Arizona State University, P.O. Box 871404, Tempe, AZ 85287-1404
> Research Office: [redacted] Assistant [redacted]
> Origins Office [redacted]
> [redacted]u
> origins.asu.edu | twitter.com/lkrauss1 | krauss.faculty.asu.edu
>
> <DA866543-7401-4A5A-8E50-FD32E33A50EC.png>
>
> On Dec 10, 2017, at 10:31 PM, Lawrence Krauss [redacted] wrote:
>
> Second Draft:
>
> I appreciate the opportunity to respond to your email. While I am running the risk that you will report my comments, if you do, either out of context, or incompletely, I am responding with an effort to be complete. It is hard to know how to respond to a list of false and/or distorted allegations, along with misleading statements on your part. I treat people I interact with with respect, and I work hard

to support and mentor students, colleagues, and members of the general public. I do not sexually harass people. If the purpose of your reporting is to somehow argue that Universities and other institutions are lax in dealing with well known individuals like myself, then in fact the situation is quite the opposite. My high public profile opens me up to more scrutiny at these institutions, not less, and it also opens me up to a host of outside complaints and allegations that other faculty do not receive, each of which the University has to respond to. The fact that I have remained a professor in all Universities with which I have been associated, in good standing, and also an officer or an invited speaker at organizations like CFI, which have strict harassment policies, is a confirmation of the fact that they trust my behavior. I was asked to be an honorary director of CFI, and invited to their last 3 meetings to speak, specifically because, as they have written me after the fact, the attendees universally appreciated my talks, my courtesy, and graciousness in spending time with the attendees. If the purpose of your report is to impugn my integrity or suggest I have a history of harassment, that too is false. As noted in one of your 'miscellaneous facts', as a scientist I try and remain skeptical, and rely on empirical evidence, rather than allegations and innuendo. I also try and judge the facts in context. The fact that Universities and other organizations employ me or have me on their boards, or invite me to meetings is because they value my contributions and my actions.

The items you list are false or distorted. Item 1 refers falsely and inaccurately to a consensual encounter in my hotel room in 2006 where we mutually decided, in a polite discussion in fact, that taking it any further would not be appropriate, and there were respectful and platonic encounters afterwards. There is nothing to comment on in item 3, which involves an anonymous 3rd party claim because I know nothing about it, there are no details provided, and it clearly was not taken seriously enough to result in any university action. Item 4 is confusing. Are you saying that because I decided I didn't want to go out to a bar with a group of attendees that I was harassing them? The second part did not happen. Re incident 5: The 'female companion' in this case is my wife, who can attest to the fact that the claim is false, which is what I wrote at the time in response to the blog in question, causing it to be taken down.

It is worth responding to Item 2 and 6 in more detail,

Re item 2: the student in question was interested in science communication, and on dozens of occasions came to me or wrote to me with questions. When she asked about advice for after graduation I DID tell her she was different than the other students in her year. The rest of them were interested in going on to graduate school, but she was interested in science communication so I told her that she might want to take a different path. Since she was the only woman in her year, as I recall, I did ask her on one of these occasions if that made it difficult for her in any way. I asked, because as a faculty member I was interested in knowing what we could do, if necessary to encourage more women to go into physics, and also because as someone she had asked for career advice from I wanted to know if that made a difference to her. Re asking her for dinner.. I have gone back over emails from that period. I have numerous requests from her asking me to go for coffee to talk, which I usually had to turn down because I was busy, and on several occasions sh specifically asked me to have coffee with her off campus to talk, and I politely declined. I did let her accompany me off campus one time to watch me do a BBC interview because she specifically requested it. I did and do have coffee and meals with students on campus, and I see nothing wrong with this. I try to treat even students as respected colleagues if possible. I was shocked when I later learned of the complaint she was apparently asked to lodge to the University, not least because there was no inappropriate interaction and also because, well after the dates you listed on which she was apparently offended, she continued to email me with joking questions or comments. Also, at a later AAAS conference, again in 2008, for which she had asked, and for which I had written her a letter of recommendation to attend, my wife and I gave her a lift in our taxi well out out of our way in order to drop her off at her hotel, and I note in an email response to her email about the conference, agin in 2008, I expressed that I would pass her regards along to my wife and vice versa. When the University later informed me of the complaint I was shocked and concerned. When I spoke to the human resources person, including relating my concerns and providing the emails in question, I was told that no formal complaint of sexual harassment was deemed at that time to be called for, and that the young woman in question had agreed to that. By that time I learned of the complaint I had already announced my intentions to leave Case to accept an offer at ASU—a very difficult decision for me because of my long-standing attachment to the University, and the excellent relations I had with my colleagues there, both among the faculty and among the administration. Because I was already in Arizona at the time I was asked not to have any further interaction with the student I agreed to that request, both to respect her sensitivities and also because it was basically moot because I was not on campus. I was also told that because it was being handled informally, that (a) it should remain confidential, which I, at least abided by, and (b) if no further complaints were lodged in that case, that the University would remove the complaint from my record after 5 years, which makes me surprised that someone violated that written agreement with you.

Re item 6: You report on ASU's response to item #6 , without including the fact that the University specifically stated there were never any allegations of sexual misconduct or harassment by me at the University, and morever the outside complaints were in fact related specifically to your item #6. Further you neglect to mention that this complaint was by an anonymous third party, not the individual who was allegedly harassed, who never lodged a complaint, and that no specific evidence was provided of the alleged transgression. I was surprised and dismayed that both ASU and ANU launched investigations on the basis of this but was told by both Universities that because of my high profile even such unsubstantiated third party complaints at private events unrelated to the University would be investigated. The complaint was investigated throughly by both ASU and ANU and both came to the conclusion that it was not credible and no university policies had been violated. . In addition ANU's investigation, which took a full month found significant inconsistencies in the allegation, suggesting distortion and fabrication, I will quote from the ANU report. The initial complaint, which in fact resulted in a temporary suspension of my position at ANU, until it was dismissed, outlined the claim you made in the words you quoted in your note to me, but it also stated

"It is the University's understanding that a complaint was lodged directly to the conference organisers at the time of the incident."

After the month-long investigation, during which I was told I was not to interact with anyone on campus (again moot because I was a hemisphere removed) the final report absolved me of any wrongdoing, and indicated information inconsistent with the original claim and apparent later claims as follows in the report, from which I quote:

"The allegations were made by an observer to the incident.

- The complaint did not identify, nor disclose the identity of the conference attendee who was allegedly touched in an unwelcome manner.
- The conference attendee who took the 'selfie' photo did not lodge a formal complaint to the conference organisers at the time of the incident (November 2016).
- The conference attendee who witnessed the incident, did not lodge a formal complaint to the conference organisers at the time of the incident (November 2016).

The photo submitted as part of the complaint does not provide evidence of any physical contact.
- The complainant alleged that a photo exists, showing your hand on the breast of the conference attendee who took the 'selfie' photo. This photo was not made available to the Australian National University, although it was requested in the course of the investigation."

(And for the record I often put my hand up in front of a camera if there is a flash, as I specifically request selfies not to include flashes, so that I don't end up with a series bright spots in front of my eyes for the next half hour)

What makes this particular type of allegation so repugnant is that I get asked for literally thousands of selfies, and when people come up to me they are vulnerable, often shaking, and sometimes overly aggressive. I am particularly proud of the way I attempt to make all people feel at ease, and respected, rather than humiliated. Thus, this false claim strikes at the heart of what I am about, which is to acknowledge fans in a way that makes them feel appreciated. As I understand you had a reporter watching me sign books and take selfies at the CFI conference in Las Vegas this year, that behavior is what they will have witnessed. Moreover, I am proud of the interactions I have had at both Case and ASU, with students, colleagues and staff of all genders and ethnicities. I have worked hard to support them, mentor them, and treat them with respect. I treat others as responsible adults, and I expect to be treated equally.

Lawrence M. Krauss
Director, The Origins Project at ASU
Co-Director, Cosmology Initiative
Foundation Professor
School of Earth & Space Exploration and Physics Department
Arizona State University, P.O. Box 871404, Tempe, AZ 85287-1404
Research Offic[redacted], Assistant[redacted]
Origins Office[redacted]
[redacted]
origins.asu.edu | twitter.com/lkrauss1 | krauss.faculty.asu.edu

<DA866543-7401-4A5A-8E50-FD32E33A50EC.png>

On Dec 10, 2017, at 9:53 PM, Lawrence Krauss[redacted] wrote:

First draft:

It is hard to know how to respond to a list of false and/or distorted allegations, along with misleading statements on your part. Needless to say, I treat people I interact with with respect, and I work hard to support and mentor students, colleagues, and members of the general public. I do not sexually harass people. If the purpose of your reporting is to somehow argue that that Universities and other institutions are lax in dealing with well known individuals like myself, then in fact the situation is quite the opposite. My high public profile opens me up to more scrutiny at these institutions, not less, and it also opens me up to a host of outside complaints and allegations that other faculty do not receive, each of which the University has to respond to. The fact that I have remained a professor in all Universities with which I have been associated, in good standing, and also an officer or an invited speaker at organizations like CFI, which have strict harassment policies, is a confirmation of the fact that they trust my behavior. I was asked to be an honorary director of CFI, and invited to their last 3 meetings to speak, specifically because, as they have written me after the fact, the attendees universally appreciated my talks, my courtesy, and graciousness in spending time with the attendees. If the purpose of your report is to impugn my integrity or suggest I have a history of harassment, that too is false. As noted in one of your 'miscellaneous facts', as a scientist I try and remain skeptical, and rely on empirical evidence, rather than allegations and innuendo. I also try and judge the facts in context. The fact that Universities and other organizations employ me or have me on their boards, or invite me to meetings is because they value my contributions and my actions.

Your specific allegations are false or distorted. Item 1 refers to a consensual encounter in my hotel room in 2006 where we mutually decided, in a polite discussion in fact, that taking it any further would not be appropriate, and had respectful encounters afterwards. I cannot comment on item 3, which involves an anonymous 3rd party claim, because I know nothing about it, and it was not taken seriously enough to result in any university action. Item 4 is confusing. Are you saying that because I decided I didn't want to go out to a bar with a group of attendees that I was harassing them? The second part is false. I don't do that. Re incident 5: The 'female companion' in this case is my wife, who can attest to the fact that the claim is false, which is what I wrote in response to the blog in question, causing it to be taken down.

It is worthwhile responding to Item 2 and 6 in more detail, Re item 2: the student in question was interested in science communication, and on dozens of occasions came to me or wrote to me with questions. When she asked about advice for after graduation I DID tell her she was different than the other students in her year. The rest of them were interested in going on to graduate school, but she was interested in science communication so I told her that she might want to take a different path. Since she was the only woman in her year, as I recall, I did ask her on one of these occasions if that made it difficult for her in any way. I asked, because as a faculty member I was interested, and also because as someone she had asked for career advice from I wanted to know if that made a difference to her. Re asking her for dinner.. I have gone back over emails from that period. I have numerous requests from her to go for coffee to talk, which I usually had to turn down because I was busy, including several occasions where she asked me to have coffee with her off campus to talk, and I politely declined. I did let her accompany me off campus one time to watch me do a BBC interview because she specifically requested it. I did and do have coffee and meals with students on campus, and I see nothing wrong with this. I was shocked when I later learned of her complaint, not least because there was no inappropriate interaction and also because well after the date on which she is said to have been offended, she continued to email me with joking questions or comments, and at a AAAS conference in 2008, for which she had asked, and for which I had written her a letter of recommendation to attend, my wife and I gave her a lift well out out of our way to drop her off at her hotel, and I note in an email response to her email about the conference, agin in 2008, I expressed that I would pass her regards along to my wife and vice versa. When the University informed me of the complaint I was shocked and concerned. When I spoke to the human resources person, including relating my concerns and providing the emails in question, I was told that no formal complaint of sexual harassment was deemed to be warranted in this case, and that the young woman in question had agreed to that. By that time I learned of the complaint I had already announced my intentions to leave Case to accept an offer at ASU—a very difficult decision for me because of my long-standing attachment to the University, and the excellent relations I had with my colleagues there, both among the faculty and among the administration. Because I was already in Arizona at the time I was asked not to have any further interaction with the student I agreed to that request because it was basically moot. I was also told that because it was being handled informally, that (a) it should remain confidential, which I, at least abided by, and (b) if no further complaints were lodged in that case, that the University would remove the allegation from my record after 5 years, which makes me surprised that someone violated that written agreement with you.

Re item 6: You report on ASU's response to item #6 , without including the fact that the University specifically stated there were never any allegations of sexual misconduct or harassment by me at the University, and the outside complaints were in fact related specifically to your item #6. Further you neglect to mention that this complaint was by an anonymous third party, not the individual who was allegedly harassed, who never lodged a complain, and that no specific evidence was provided of the alleged transgression. I was surprised and dismayed that both ASU and ANU launched investigations on the basis of this but was told by both Universities that because of my high profile even such unsubstantiated third party complaints at private events unrelated to the University would be investigated. The complaint was investigated throughly by both ASU and ANU and both came to the conclusion that it was not credible and no university policies had been violated. . In addition ANU's investigation, which took a full month found significant inconsistencies in the allegation, suggesting distortion and fabrication, I will quote from the ANU report. The initial complaint, which in fact resulted in a temporary suspension by ANU outlined the claim you made in the words you quoted in your note to me, along with the statement made in the complaint that

"It is the University's understanding that a complaint was lodged directly to the conference organisers at the time of the incident."

After the investigation, the final report absolved me of any wrongdoing, and indicated information inconsistent with the original claim and apparent later claims as follows:

"The allegations were made by an observer to the incident.
- The complaint did not identify, nor disclose the identity of the conference attendee who was allegedly touched in an unwelcome manner.
- The conference attendee who took the 'selfie' photo did not lodge a formal complaint to the conference organisers at the time of the incident (November 2016).
- The conference attendee who witnessed the incident, did not lodge a formal complaint to the conference organisers at the time of the incident (November 2016).
The photo submitted as part of the complaint does not provide evidence of any physical contact.
- The complainant alleged that a photo exists, showing your hand on the breast of the conference attendee who took the 'selfie' photo. This photo was not made available to the Australian National University, although it was requested in the course of the investigation."

(And for the record I often put my hand up in front of a camera if there is a flash, as I specifically request selfies not to include flashes, so that I don't end up with a series bright spots in front of my eyes for the next half hour)

What makes this particular type of allegation so repugnant is that I get asked for literally thousands of selfies, and when people come up to me they are vulnerable, often shaking, and sometimes overly aggressive. I am particularly proud of the way I attempt to make all people feel at ease, and respected, rather than humiliated. Thus, this false claim strikes at the heart of what I am about, which is to acknowledge fans in a way that makes them feel appreciated. As I understand you had a reporter watching me sign books and take selfies at the CFI conference in Las Vegas this year, that behavior is what they will have witnessed. Moreover, I am proud of the interactions I have had at both Case and ASU, with students, colleagues and staff. I have had numerous female graduate students, postdocs, employees, and colleagues, and as ASU attested to you, none of these have ever complained of harassment. Quite the contrary in fact, as I have worked hard to support them, mentor them, and treat them with respect. I treat others as responsible adults, and I expect to be treated equally.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Peter Aldhous [redacted]
Subject: URGENT: BuzzFeed News inquiry re allegations of sexual harassment
Date: December 10, 2017 at 5:12:27 PM PST
To: [redacted] [redacted]

Dr. Krauss:

As you know, I'm a reporter for BuzzFeed News who has been investigating sexual misconduct allegations against you. As we've already discussed by email, I'd very much like to interview you about these allegations in detail.

In particular, you stated in an email sent on Nov 13 that two universities had investigated an incident (# 6 below). You claimed that "both Universities independently concluded that the report was unsubstantiated and fabricated with malicious intent." We are not aware that either university concluded fabrication or malicious intent, so if you have evidence to support this assertion, we would like to see and discuss it.

The story concerns your actions towards students while a professor of physics at Case Western Reserve University, as well as your conduct in non-academic settings as a prominent figure in the skeptics movement. I am reporting this story along with two of my colleagues on the science desk, Azeen Ghorayshi and Virginia Hughes.

Our story is about several allegations of sexual misconduct dating from 2006 to 2016 (see full details below). Our reporting also goes into how the various institutions you have been affiliated with — Case Western, Arizona State University, the Australian National University, the New College of the Humanities, and the Center for Inquiry, for which you serve as an honorary member of the board of directors — have handled complaints and concerns about your behavior during this time.

Our story is corroborated by emails, university documents, official complaints, testimony from victims and eyewitnesses, and interviews with more than two dozen of your current and former academic colleagues, students, and peers in the skeptics movement.

I wanted to offer you the opportunity to comment and/or respond to the main facts we plan to publish. If you wish to comment on any of the below findings, we need to hear from you as soon as possible. **We are planning on publishing our story Tuesday morning, Eastern US Time.**

Based on our reporting, this is what we plan to publish:

Incident 1:

- In November of 2006, at an event launching the new Center for Inquiry in Washington D.C., you met a volunteer for CFI D.C.
- At the event, you asked for her business card. Later, you followed her as she was leaving and asked her if she was "of age."
- Later, you emailed her to invite her to dinner.
- You planned to dine with her in the restaurant at the Washington D.C. hotel where you were staying.
- You told her to come up to your room first because you needed to finish some work.
- In your hotel room, you seemed in no rush to leave. You ordered a cheese plate, and later champagne, despite her suggestion that you go down to dinner.
- You then made a comment about her eye makeup, getting very close to her face.
- You then lifted her by her arms, and pushed her onto the bed beneath you, forcibly kissing her and trying to pull down the crotch of her tights.
- She struggled to push you off her.
- You said, "When I was in college I could never get a girl that looked like you."

- When you pulled out a condom, she got out from under you. She said “I have to go,” and rushed out of the room.

Incident 2:

- In an incident that occurred in fall of 2007 while you were a physics professor at Case Western Reserve University, a student tried to talk to you about her plans after graduation. You mentioned to her how tough it must be to have all the other physics majors asking her out on dates.
- In a second incident in December of 2007, while you were still at Case Western, the same student visited your office to interview you for a student science journal. You closed the door behind her, and ignored the questions she had prepared. Then you made a casual comment about taking her out for dinner.
- Later, in a regular column for the school paper, she described her experiences with you, without mentioning you by name. “There was even one particular creep of a professor who once told me he thought differently of me compared to other students and asked me to dinner: a situation so disturbing that it left me upset for weeks afterward,” she wrote.
- She was then approached by a dean at the university, who suspected that she was referring to you, based on a previously reported incident with another student. He encouraged her to make a complaint, and she did.
- University investigators interviewed both you and the student.
- On September 4, 2008, Susan Nickel-Schindewolf, the university’s associate vice president for student affairs, wrote to the student, telling her that the investigation was complete. She wrote that you had been told: “This type of behavior could constitute sexual harassment in violation of the university’s sexual harassment policy.”
- The letter also stated that you were prohibited from making contact with the student as long as she remained at Case.
- The letter also stated that you are required to get approval from the dean or the chair of the physics department before setting foot on the campus again.
- The letter also stated, “Dr. Krauss expressed regret about having a negative impact on you, and also his willingness to use this complaint as an opportunity to reflect and improve on his future interactions with students.”
- By then, you had already left Case, taking up your current position at Arizona State University the month before.
- “The opportunities being offered at ASU are simply too great to turn down at this stage in my career,” you told Case colleagues, in an email announcing your departure on April 16, 2008.

Incident 3:

- A former Case Western physics department administrator confirmed that she had reported a previous incident involving a student who had confided in her about your inappropriate behavior towards her.

Incident 4:

- You met a student from another university, an atheist activist, in March 2008 at the American Atheists Convention in Minneapolis. She wanted to expand the atheist group she ran at the midwestern university she was attending, and hoped to convince you to come and speak. You initially seemed enthusiastic.
- During the convention, attendees including you and Richard Dawkins went for dinner with the student and volunteers for Dawkins’ foundation.
- Afterwards, the student invited you to join the volunteers for a drink.
- You asked her to come get you in your hotel room. She was wary of your intentions, and so brought a male friend with her. Opening the door to find them both there, you informed her you had decided not to go.
- You met this student again at the American Atheists Convention in Des Moines, Iowa, in April 2011.

- You pulled over a chair for her in the bar, and then started running your hand up her leg under the table.
- She tried to shift her body away from you, and you persisted in putting your hand on her leg. She crossed her legs, and you kept trying. Then she turned her entire body away.

Incident 5:

- This incident allegedly occurred on in May 2011 on a CFI cruise. We understand that CFI staff were informed that you had propositioned a female cruise-goer, who rejected an invitation to join you and your female companion for sex in your cabin.
- At least two CFI staffers were sufficiently concerned about reports of your behavior that they urged CFI's president not to invite you on a 2014 cruise of the Galápagos Islands. You were invited on that cruise, however.

Incident 6:

- During a visit to Melbourne, Australia, in November 2016, you were accused of sexual misconduct once again.
- The incident happened at a dinner held at the Melbourne Zoo as part of the Australian Skeptics National Convention, where you were a featured speaker.
- With conference delegates chatting over drinks, a woman asked you for a celebrity selfie.
- As the woman held out her phone to take the picture, you reached over her shoulder and grabbed her right breast.
- She immediately reacted, bodychecking you and spinning around. "Don't do that," she said.
- BuzzFeed News has seen the complaint made by another woman to ASU, ANU, and the New College of the Humanities in London, including the selfie, her face obscured to conceal her identity. It shows your hand in motion as a blur in front of her shoulder, apparently moving toward her chest. Two other eyewitnesses have confirmed the complainant's account of what happened.
- In April 2017, the complainant described the incident on her blog. After hearing more about your reputation for inappropriate behavior from blog readers, she decided to file a complaint about the Nov. 2016 incident.
- On July 16, she filed formal complaints with Arizona State University, and with the Australian National University in Canberra and the New College of the Humanities in London, where you have visiting appointments.
- Both Arizona State and the Australian National University told her they would look into the matter. But neither university found against you.
- "Based on the material available to the University, we do not have sufficient evidence to substantiate the allegations," Kiaran Kirk, dean of the College of Science at the Australian National University, wrote to her.
- Erin Ellison, who heads Arizona State's Office of Equity & Inclusion, wrote to her explaining that an inquiry "did not find a violation of university policy."
- In October, Arizona State denied a request from BuzzFeed News for documents relating to complaints of sexual harassment against you. However, Cynthia Jewett, the university's senior associate general counsel, noted that **two** individuals, neither affiliated with the university, had complained about you. "The University did not find either communication to state a credible allegation," Jewett wrote.

Miscellaneous facts:

- In 2008, you founded the Origins Project at Arizona State University in Tempe, a multidisciplinary effort to understand the origins of the universe, life, and social systems. You have led that effort ever since.
- Thanks to best-selling books like *The Physics of Star Trek* and *A Universe From Nothing*, frequent essays in publications including the New Yorker and the New York Times, and the documentary you made

with biologist Richard Dawkins, called *The Unbelievers*, you are celebrated as one of America's leading public intellectuals.

- You served on the science policy committee for Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign and are a vocal critic of President Donald Trump.
- You also make regular public appearances across the world, often at gatherings of skeptics and atheists.
- At CSICon in Las Vegas in October, a few dozen fans paid $500 per head to attend a VIP luncheon with you and Dawkins.
- Many more lined up to get you to sign their copy of your latest book, *The Greatest Story Ever Told — So Far*.
- Online, people can buy T-shirts emblazoned "Lawrence Krauss for President."
- In talks and interviews, you have argued that our universe arose without divine intervention, that religion drives xenophobia, and that our brains are hardwired to believe.
- You have stated that science provides answers to many of life's biggest questions, and can even fix great societal injustices.
- Earlier this year, at a Q&A event to promote your new book, the conversation came around to the dearth of women and minorities in science. "Science itself overcomes misogyny and prejudice and bias," you said. "It's built in: Questioning yourself, always questioning results, questioning others, relying on empirical evidence."
- You have clashed with some skeptics over your defense of Jeffrey Epstein, a billionaire financier who in 2008 was convicted for soliciting prostitution from underage girls, and spent 13 months in a Florida jail.
- Through his private foundation, Epstein has funded the work of several prominent scientists. He has provided funding for your Origins Project, supporting lectureship and scholarship programs, most recently pledging $100,000 in 2014.
- In April 2011, you told the Daily Beast: "As a scientist I always judge things on empirical evidence and he always has women ages 19 to 23 around him, but I've never seen anything else, so as a scientist, my presumption is that whatever the problems were I would believe him over other people."
- In a blog comment about the Epstein controversy, you wrote: "I remain skeptical, and I support a man whose character I believe I know...If you want to condemn me for that, so be it."
- You were made an honorary member of CFI's board of directors in December 2011.
- A blog post published in August 2013 described incidents #1 and #4, naming you. Another post, published at around the same time, described incident #5.
- The first post was edited to remove your name after you had commented that the allegations of assault were "potentially illegal." The second post was quickly taken down.

Again, if you wish to comment on or clarify any of these points, please get in touch with us as soon as possible. If I do not respond immediately it is because I am on another call, so please leave the best phone number to reach you.

Thanks,
Peter Aldhous
[redacted]

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please note

The information contained in this communication is confidential, may be attorney-client privileged, may constitute inside information, and is intended only for the use of the addressee. It is the property of
JEE
Unauthorized use, disclosure or copying of this communication or any part thereof is strictly prohibited and may be unlawful. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by return e-mail or by e-mail to jeevacation@gmail.com, and destroy this communication and all copies thereof, including all attachments. copyright -all rights reserved

Lawrence M. Krauss
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Research Office [redacted] | Assistant [redacted]
Origins Office [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] | twitter.com/lkrauss1 | krauss.faculty.asu.edu

From: jeffrey E. [jeevacation@gmail.com]
Sent: 12/11/2017 11:18:58 AM
To: Lawrence Krauss [redacted]
Subject: Re: URGENT: BuzzFeed News inquiry re allegations of sexual harassment
Attachments: DA866543-7401-4A5A-8E50-FD32E33A50EC.png

Importance: High

normaly thier strategy will be to take back your defense to the accusers. and attack each one. if they find you are right they will leave out. and only go with the conflicted. I think you should include short concise cover letter. that you would like published in it entirety. it can refence your attacjment that you will put on your web site? . that goes into more details but in general , these are false. they were either investigated and found lacking or ignored. etc. often they throw out the near publishing date merely to get you to ansser.

On Mon, Dec 11, 2017 at 7:53 AM, Lawrence Krauss [redacted] wrote:

a few more minor changes.. one in first line of second paragraph and one misspelling corrected..so you can read this one:

Lawrence M. Krauss
Director, The Origins Project at ASU
Co-Director, Cosmology Initiative
Foundation Professor
School of Earth & Space Exploration and Physics Department
Arizona State University, P.O. Box 871404, Tempe, AZ 85287-1404
Research Office [redacted] Assistant [redacted]
Origins Office [redacted]
[redacted]
origins.asu.edu | twitter.com/lkrauss1 | krauss.faculty.asu.edu

On Dec 10, 2017, at 10:31 PM, Lawrence Krauss [redacted] wrote:

Second Draft:

I appreciate the opportunity to respond to your email. While I am running the risk that you will report my comments, if you do, either out of context, or incompletely, I am responding with an effort to be complete. It is hard to know how to respond to a list of false and/or distorted allegations, along with misleading statements on your part. I treat people I interact with with respect, and I work hard to support and mentor students, colleagues, and members of the general public. I do not sexually harass people. If the purpose of your reporting is to somehow argue that Universities and other institutions are lax in dealing with well known individuals like myself, then in fact the situation is quite the opposite. My high public profile opens me up to more scrutiny at these institutions, not less, and it also opens me up to a host of outside complaints and allegations that other faculty do not receive, each of which the University has to respond to. The fact that I have remained a professor in all Universities with which I have been associated, in good standing, and also an officer or an invited speaker at organizations like CFI, which have strict harassment policies, is a confirmation of the fact that they trust my behavior. I was asked to be an honorary director of CFI, and invited to their last 3 meetings to speak, specifically because, as they have written me after the fact, the attendees universally appreciated my talks, my courtesy, and graciousness in spending time with the attendees. If the purpose of your report is to impugn my integrity or suggest I have a history of harassment, that too is false. As noted in one of your 'miscellaneous facts', as a scientist I try and remain skeptical, and rely on empirical evidence, rather than allegations and innuendo. I also try and judge the facts in context. The fact that Universities and other organizations employ me or have me on their boards, or invite me to meetings is because they value my contributions and my actions.

The items you list are false or distorted. Item 1 refers falsely and inaccurately to a consensual encounter in my hotel room in 2006 where we mutually decided, in a polite discussion in fact, that taking it any further would not be appropriate, and there were respectful and platonic encounters afterwards. There is nothing to comment on in item 3, which involves an anonymous 3rd party claim because I know nothing about it, there are no details provided, and it clearly was not taken seriously enough to result in any university action. Item 4 is confusing. Are you saying that because I decided I didn't want to go out to a bar with a group of attendees that I was harassing them? The second part did not happen. Re incident 5: The 'female companion' in this case is my wife, who can attest to the fact that the claim is false, which is what I wrote at the time in response to the blog in question, causing it to be taken down.

It is worth responding to Item 2 and 6 in more detail,

Re item 2: the student in question was interested in science communication, and on dozens of occasions came to me or wrote to me with questions. When she asked about advice for after graduation I DID tell her she was different than the other students in her year. The rest of them were interested in going on to graduate school, but she was interested in science communication so I told her that she might want to take a different path. Since she was the only woman in her year, as I recall, I did ask her on one of these occasions if that made it difficult for her in any way. I asked, because as a faculty member I was interested in knowing what we could do, if necessary to encourage more women to go into physics, and also because as someone she had asked for career advice from I wanted to know if that made a difference to her. Re asking her for dinner.. I have gone back over emails from that period. I have numerous requests from her asking me to go for coffee to talk, which I usually had to turn down because I was busy, and on several occasions sh specifically asked me to have coffee with her off campus to talk, and I politely declined. I did let her accompany me off campus one time to watch me do a BBC interview because she specifically requested it. I did and do have coffee and meals with students on campus, and I see nothing wrong with this. I try to treat even students as respected colleagues if possible. I was shocked when I later learned of the complaint she was apparently asked to lodge to the University, not least because there was no inappropriate interaction and also because, well after the dates you listed on which she was apparently offended, she continued to email me with joking questions or comments. Also, at a later AAAS conference, again in 2008, for which she had asked, and for which I had written her a letter of recommendation to attend, my wife and I gave her a lift in our taxi well out out of our way in order to drop her off at her hotel, and I note in an email response to her email about the conference, agin in 2008, I expressed that I would pass her regards along to my wife and vice versa. When the University later informed me of the complaint I was shocked and concerned. When I spoke to the human resources person, including relating my concerns and providing the emails in question, I was told that no formal complaint of sexual harassment was deemed at that time to be called for, and that the young woman in question had agreed to that. By that time I learned of the complaint I had already announced my intentions to leave Case to accept an offer at ASU—a very difficult decision for me because of my long-standing attachment to the University, and the excellent relations I had with my colleagues there, both among the faculty and among the administration. Because I was already in Arizona at the time I was asked not to have any further interaction with the student I agreed to that request, both to respect her sensitivities and also because it was basically moot because I was not on campus. I was also told that because it was being handled informally, that (a) it should remain confidential, which I, at least abided by, and (b) if no further complaints were lodged in that case, that the University would remove the complaint from my record after 5 years, which makes me surprised that someone violated that written agreement with you.

Re item 6: You report on ASU's response to item #6 , without including the fact that the University specifically stated there were never any allegations of sexual misconduct or harassment by me at the University, and morever the outside complaints were in fact related specifically to your item #6. Further you neglect to mention that this complaint was by an anonymous third party, not the individual who was allegedly harassed, who never lodged a complaint, and that no specific evidence was provided of the alleged transgression. I was surprised and dismayed that both ASU and ANU launched investigations on the basis of this but was told by both Universities that because of my high profile even such unsubstantiated third party complaints at private events unrelated to the University would be investigated. The complaint was investigated throughly by both ASU and ANU and both came to the conclusion that it was not credible and no university policies had been violated. . In addition ANU's investigation, which took a full month found significant inconsistencies in the allegation, suggesting distortion and fabrication, I will quote from the ANU report. The initial complaint, which in fact resulted in a temporary suspension of my position at ANU, until it was dismissed, outlined the claim you made in the words you quoted in your note to me, but it also stated

"It is the University's understanding that a complaint was lodged directly to the conference organisers at the time of the incident."

After the month-long investigation, during which I was told I was not to interact with anyone on campus (again moot because I was a hemisphere removed) the final report absolved me of any wrongdoing, and indicated information inconsistent with the original claim and apparent later claims as follows in the report, from which I quote:

"The allegations were made by an observer to the incident.
- The complaint did not identify, nor disclose the identity of the conference attendee who was allegedly touched in
an unwelcome manner.
- The conference attendee who took the 'selfie' photo did not lodge a formal complaint to the conference organisers
at the time of the incident (November 2016).
- The conference attendee who witnessed the incident, did not lodge a formal complaint to the conference organisers
at the time of the incident (November 2016).
The photo submitted as part of the complaint does not provide evidence of any physical contact.
- The complainant alleged that a photo exists, showing your hand on the breast of the conference attendee who took
the 'selfie' photo. This photo was not made available to the Australian National University, although it was requested
in the course of the investigation."

(And for the record I often put my hand up in front of a camera if there is a flash, as I specifically request selfies not to include flashes, so that I don't end up with a series bright spots in front of my eyes for the next half hour)

What makes this particular type of allegation so repugnant is that I get asked for literally thousands of selfies, and when people come up to me they are vulnerable, often shaking, and sometimes overly aggressive. I am particularly proud of the way I attempt to make all people feel at ease, and respected, rather than humiliated. Thus, this false claim strikes at the heart of what I am about, which is to acknowledge fans in a way that makes them feel appreciated. As I understand you had a reporter watching me sign books and take selfies at the CFI conference in Las Vegas this year, that behavior is what they will have witnessed. Moreover, I am proud of the interactions I have had at both Case and ASU, with students, colleagues and staff of all genders and ethnicities. I have worked hard to support them, mentor them, and treat them with respect. I treat others as responsible adults, and I expect to be treated equally.

Lawrence M. Krauss
Director, The Origins Project at ASU
Co-Director, Cosmology Initiative
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On Dec 10, 2017, at 9:53 PM, Lawrence Krauss [redacted] wrote:

First draft:

It is hard to know how to respond to a list of false and/or distorted allegations, along with misleading statements on your part. Needless to say, I treat people I interact with with respect, and I work hard to support and mentor students, colleagues, and members of the general public. I do not sexually harass people. If the purpose of your reporting is to somehow argue that that Universities and other institutions are lax in dealing with well known individuals like myself, then in fact the situation is quite the opposite. My high public profile opens me up to more scrutiny at these institutions, not less, and it also opens me up to a host of outside complaints and allegations that other faculty do not receive, each of which the University has to respond to. The fact that I have remained a professor in all Universities with which I have been associated, in good standing, and also an officer or an invited speaker at organizations like CFI, which have strict harassment policies, is a confirmation of the fact that they trust my behavior. I was asked to be an honorary director of CFI, and invited to their last 3 meetings to speak, specifically because, as they have written me after the fact, the attendees universally appreciated my talks, my courtesy, and graciousness in spending time with the attendees. If the purpose of your report is to impugn my integrity or suggest I have a history of harassment, that too is false. As noted in one of your 'miscellaneous facts', as a scientist I try and remain skeptical, and rely on empirical evidence, rather than allegations and innuendo. I also try and judge the facts in context. The fact that Universities and other organizations employ me or have me on their boards, or invite me to meetings is because they value my contributions and my actions.

Your specific allegations are false or distorted. Item 1 refers to a consensual encounter in my hotel room in 2006 where we mutually decided, in a polite discussion in fact, that taking it any further would not be appropriate, and had respectful encounters afterwards. I cannot comment on item 3, which involves an anonymous 3rd party claim, because I know nothing about it, and it was not taken seriously enough to result in any university action. Item 4 is confusing. Are you saying that because I decided I didn't want to go out to a bar with a group of attendees that I was harassing them? The second part is false. I don't do that. Re incident 5: The 'female companion' in this case is my wife, who can attest to the fact that the claim is false, which is what I wrote in response to the blog in question, causing it to be taken down.

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"It is the University's understanding that a complaint was lodged directly to the conference organisers at the time of the incident."

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Begin forwarded message:

From: Peter Aldhous [redacted]
Subject: URGENT: BuzzFeed News inquiry re allegations of sexual harassment
Date: December 10, 2017 at 5:12:27 PM PST
To: [redacted]

Dr. Krauss:

As you know, I'm a reporter for BuzzFeed News who has been investigating sexual misconduct allegations against you. As we've already discussed by email, I'd very much like to interview you about these allegations in detail.

In particular, you stated in an email sent on Nov 13 that two universities had investigated an incident (# 6 below). You claimed that "both Universities independently concluded that the report was unsubstantiated and fabricated with malicious intent." We are not aware that either university concluded fabrication or malicious intent, so if you have evidence to support this assertion, we would like to see and discuss it.

The story concerns your actions towards students while a professor of physics at Case Western Reserve University, as well as your conduct in non-academic settings as a prominent figure in the skeptics movement. I am reporting this story along with two of my colleagues on the science desk, Azeen Ghorayshi and Virginia Hughes.

Our story is about several allegations of sexual misconduct dating from 2006 to 2016 (see full details below). Our reporting also goes into how the various institutions you have been affiliated with — Case Western, Arizona State University, the Australian National University, the New College of the Humanities, and the Center for Inquiry, for which you serve as an honorary member of the board of directors — have handled complaints and concerns about your behavior during this time.

Our story is corroborated by emails, university documents, official complaints, testimony from victims and eyewitnesses, and interviews with more than two dozen of your current and former academic colleagues, students, and peers in the skeptics movement.

I wanted to offer you the opportunity to comment and/or respond to the main facts we plan to publish. If you wish to comment on any of the below findings, we need to hear from you as soon as possible. **We are planning on publishing our story Tuesday morning, Eastern US Time.**

Based on our reporting, this is what we plan to publish:

Incident 1:

- In November of 2006, at an event launching the new Center for Inquiry in Washington D.C., you met a volunteer for CFI D.C.
- At the event, you asked for her business card. Later, you followed her as she was leaving and asked her if she was "of age."
- Later, you emailed her to invite her to dinner.
- You planned to dine with her in the restaurant at the Washington D.C. hotel where you were staying.
- You told her to come up to your room first because you needed to finish some work.
- In your hotel room, you seemed in no rush to leave. You ordered a cheese plate, and later champagne, despite her suggestion that you go down to dinner.
- You then made a comment about her eye makeup, getting very close to her face.
- You then lifted her by her arms, and pushed her onto the bed beneath you, forcibly kissing her and trying to pull down the crotch of her tights.
- She struggled to push you off her.
- You said, "When I was in college I could never get a girl that looked like you."
- When you pulled out a condom, she got out from under you. She said "I have to go," and rushed out of the room.

Incident 2:

- In an incident that occurred in fall of 2007 while you were a physics professor at Case Western Reserve University, a student tried to talk to you about her plans after graduation. You mentioned to her how tough it must be to have all the other physics majors asking her out on dates.
- In a second incident in December of 2007, while you were still at Case Western, the same student visited your office to interview you for a student science journal. You closed the door behind her, and ignored the questions she had prepared. Then you made a casual comment about taking her out for dinner.

- Later, in a regular column for the school paper, she described her experiences with you, without mentioning you by name. “There was even one particular creep of a professor who once told me he thought differently of me compared to other students and asked me to dinner: a situation so disturbing that it left me upset for weeks afterward,” she wrote.
- She was then approached by a dean at the university, who suspected that she was referring to you, based on a previously reported incident with another student. He encouraged her to make a complaint, and she did.
- University investigators interviewed both you and the student.
- On September 4, 2008, Susan Nickel-Schindewolf, the university’s associate vice president for student affairs, wrote to the student, telling her that the investigation was complete. She wrote that you had been told: “This type of behavior could constitute sexual harassment in violation of the university’s sexual harassment policy.”
- The letter also stated that you were prohibited from making contact with the student as long as she remained at Case.
- The letter also stated that you are required to get approval from the dean or the chair of the physics department before setting foot on the campus again.
- The letter also stated, “Dr. Krauss expressed regret about having a negative impact on you, and also his willingness to use this complaint as an opportunity to reflect and improve on his future interactions with students.”
- By then, you had already left Case, taking up your current position at Arizona State University the month before.
- “The opportunities being offered at ASU are simply too great to turn down at this stage in my career,” you told Case colleagues, in an email announcing your departure on April 16, 2008.

Incident 3:

- A former Case Western physics department administrator confirmed that she had reported a previous incident involving a student who had confided in her about your inappropriate behavior towards her.

Incident 4:

- You met a student from another university, an atheist activist, in March 2008 at the American Atheists Convention in Minneapolis. She wanted to expand the atheist group she ran at the midwestern university she was attending, and hoped to convince you to come and speak. You initially seemed enthusiastic.
- During the convention, attendees including you and Richard Dawkins went for dinner with the student and volunteers for Dawkins’ foundation.
- Afterwards, the student invited you to join the volunteers for a drink.
- You asked her to come get you in your hotel room. She was wary of your intentions, and so brought a male friend with her. Opening the door to find them both there, you informed her you had decided not to go.
- You met this student again at the American Atheists Convention in Des Moines, Iowa, in April 2011.
- You pulled over a chair for her in the bar, and then started running your hand up her leg under the table.
- She tried to shift her body away from you, and you persisted in putting your hand on her leg. She crossed her legs, and you kept trying. Then she turned her entire body away.

Incident 5:
- This incident allegedly occurred on in May 2011 on a CFI cruise. We understand that CFI staff were informed that you had propositioned a female cruise-goer, who rejected an invitation to join you and your female companion for sex in your cabin.

- At least two CFI staffers were sufficiently concerned about reports of your behavior that they urged CFI's president not to invite you on a 2014 cruise of the Galápagos Islands. You were invited on that cruise, however.

Incident 6:

- During a visit to Melbourne, Australia, in November 2016, you were accused of sexual misconduct once again.
- The incident happened at a dinner held at the Melbourne Zoo as part of the Australian Skeptics National Convention, where you were a featured speaker.
- With conference delegates chatting over drinks, a woman asked you for a celebrity selfie.
- As the woman held out her phone to take the picture, you reached over her shoulder and grabbed her right breast.
- She immediately reacted, bodychecking you and spinning around. "Don't do that," she said.
- BuzzFeed News has seen the complaint made by another woman to ASU, ANU, and the New College of the Humanities in London, including the selfie, her face obscured to conceal her identity. It shows your hand in motion as a blur in front of her shoulder, apparently moving toward her chest. Two other eyewitnesses have confirmed the complainant's account of what happened.
- In April 2017, the complainant described the incident on her blog. After hearing more about your reputation for inappropriate behavior from blog readers, she decided to file a complaint about the Nov. 2016 incident.
- On July 16, she filed formal complaints with Arizona State University, and with the Australian National University in Canberra and the New College of the Humanities in London, where you have visiting appointments.
- Both Arizona State and the Australian National University told her they would look into the matter. But neither university found against you.
- "Based on the material available to the University, we do not have sufficient evidence to substantiate the allegations," Kiaran Kirk, dean of the College of Science at the Australian National University, wrote to her.
- Erin Ellison, who heads Arizona State's Office of Equity & Inclusion, wrote to her explaining that an inquiry "did not find a violation of university policy."
- In October, Arizona State denied a request from BuzzFeed News for documents relating to complaints of sexual harassment against you. However, Cynthia Jewett, the university's senior associate general counsel, noted that **two** individuals, neither affiliated with the university, had complained about you. "The University did not find either communication to state a credible allegation," Jewett wrote.

Miscellaneous facts:

- In 2008, you founded the Origins Project at Arizona State University in Tempe, a multidisciplinary effort to understand the origins of the universe, life, and social systems. You have led that effort ever since.
- Thanks to best-selling books like *The Physics of Star Trek* and *A Universe From Nothing*, frequent essays in publications including the New Yorker and the New York Times, and the documentary you made with biologist Richard Dawkins, called *The Unbelievers*, you are celebrated as one of America's leading public intellectuals.
- You served on the science policy committee for Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign and are a vocal critic of President Donald Trump.
- You also make regular public appearances across the world, often at gatherings of skeptics and atheists.
- At CSICon in Las Vegas in October, a few dozen fans paid $500 per head to attend a VIP luncheon with you and Dawkins.
- Many more lined up to get you to sign their copy of your latest book, *The Greatest Story Ever Told — So Far*.

- Online, people can buy T-shirts emblazoned "Lawrence Krauss for President."
- In talks and interviews, you have argued that our universe arose without divine intervention, that religion drives xenophobia, and that our brains are hardwired to believe.
- You have stated that science provides answers to many of life's biggest questions, and can even fix great societal injustices.
- Earlier this year, at a Q&A event to promote your new book, the conversation came around to the dearth of women and minorities in science. "Science itself overcomes misogyny and prejudice and bias," you said. "It's built in: Questioning yourself, always questioning results, questioning others, relying on empirical evidence."
- You have clashed with some skeptics over your defense of Jeffrey Epstein, a billionaire financier who in 2008 was convicted for soliciting prostitution from underage girls, and spent 13 months in a Florida jail.
- Through his private foundation, Epstein has funded the work of several prominent scientists. He has provided funding for your Origins Project, supporting lectureship and scholarship programs, most recently pledging $100,000 in 2014.
- In April 2011, you told the Daily Beast: "As a scientist I always judge things on empirical evidence and he always has women ages 19 to 23 around him, but I've never seen anything else, so as a scientist, my presumption is that whatever the problems were I would believe him over other people."
- In a blog comment about the Epstein controversy, you wrote: "I remain skeptical, and I support a man whose character I believe I know...If you want to condemn me for that, so be it."
- You were made an honorary member of CFI's board of directors in December 2011.
- A blog post published in August 2013 described incidents #1 and #4, naming you. Another post, published at around the same time, described incident #5.
- The first post was edited to remove your name after you had commented that the allegations of assault were "potentially illegal." The second post was quickly taken down.

Again, if you wish to comment on or clarify any of these points, please get in touch with us as soon as possible. If I do not respond immediately it is because I am on another call, so please leave the best phone number to reach you.

Thanks,
Peter Aldhous
[redacted]

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please note
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Unauthorized use, disclosure or copying of this communication or any part thereof is strictly prohibited and may be unlawful. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by return e-mail or by e-mail to jeevacation@gmail.com, and

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
FOI/PA
DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET
FOI/PA# 1203982-1

Total Deleted Page(s) = 156
Page 30 ~ b6; b7C;
Page 31 ~ b6; b7C;
Page 32 ~ b6; b7C;
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Page 34 ~ b6; b7C;
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Page 231 ~ b6; b7C;
Page 232 ~ b6; b7C;
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Page 234 ~ b6; b7C;
Page 235 ~ b6; b7C;
Page 236 ~ b6; b7C;
Page 237 ~ b6; b7C;
Page 238 ~ b6; b7C;
Page 239 ~ b6; b7C;
Page 240 ~ b6; b7C;
Page 241 ~ b6; b7C;
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Page 285 ~ b6; b7C;
Page 333 ~ OTHER - Sealed per Court Order 08-8068-LRJ;
Page 334 ~ OTHER - Sealed per Court Order 08-8068-LRJ;
Page 335 ~ OTHER - Sealed per Court Order 08-8068-LRJ;
Page 336 ~ OTHER - Sealed per Court Order 08-8068-LRJ;
Page 337 ~ OTHER - Sealed per Court Order 08-8068-LRJ;
Page 338 ~ OTHER - Sealed per Court Order 08-8068-LRJ;
Page 339 ~ b5; b6; b7C;
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Page 341 ~ b5; b6; b7C;
Page 342 ~ b5; b6; b7C;
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Page 345 ~ b5; b6; b7C;
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Page 350 ~ b5; b6; b7C;
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Page 389 ~ b6; b7C;
Page 390 ~ b6; b7C;
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Page 393 ~ Duplicate - serial 168;
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Automated Serial Permanent Charge-Out
FD-5a (1-5-94)

Date: 03/06/07 Time: 11:04

Case ID: 31E-MM-108062 Serial: 71

Description of Document:

Type : OTHER
Date : 02/02/06
To : [redacted] b3
From : MIAMI
Topic: EXECUTED FGJ SUBPOENA

Reason for Permanent Charge-Out:

transfer to subpoena sub

Transferred to:

Case ID: 31E-MM-108062-SBP Serial: 7

Employee: [redacted] b6 b7C

31E-MM-108062-71

FD-302 (Rev. 10-6-95)

-1-

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 03/07/2007

[redacted] date of birth [redacted] Social Security Account Number [redacted] was interviewed at his place of employment, [redacted] Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, telephone [redacted] was advised of the identity of the interviewing agent and purpose of the interview. [redacted] voluntarily provided the following information: b6 b7C

[redacted] for Jeffrey Epstein on approximately [redacted] Epstein visited the [redacted] once and [redacted] traveled to Epstein's Palm Beach, Florida residence [redacted]

[redacted] Epstein's residence were conducted in [redacted] [redacted] could not recall specific names of other individuals he encountered at Epstein's residence but advised that Epstein's [redacted] (name unknown) was present and [redacted] Massage Therapist [redacted]. Females in their mid-20's and unknown staff members were also observed at the residence during [redacted]

[redacted] telephone [redacted], performed massage therapy for Epstein and his staff members on numerous occasions. [redacted] was frequently requested based on her skills as a massage therapist. Fees were approximately $100.00 for a massage conducted [redacted] and $300.00 or higher [redacted].

[redacted] b3 b6 b7C

Investigation on 03/06/2007 at Palm Beach Gardens, Florida

File # 31E-MM-108062 Date dictated 03/07/2007

by SA [redacted] b6 b7C

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31E-MM-108062-72

(Rev. 01-31-2003)

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE **Date:** 03/12/2007

To: Miami

From: Miami
PB2/PBCRA
Contact: SA [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By:

Case ID #: 31E-MM-108062 ~~(Pending)~~

Title: JEFFREY EPSTEIN;
[redacted]
WSTA - CHILD PROSTITUTION

Synopsis: To remove writer as co-case agent.

Details: Due to writer's transfer from the Miami Division, PBCRA, to FBIHQ, effective March 16, 2007, it is requested that writer be removed as co-case agent.

♦♦

[redacted] SA [redacted]
please rem
as co-case agent.
[redacted]
3/12/07

07 [redacted] 01.EC

31E-MM-108062-73

(Rev. 01-31-2003)

080[redacted]01.ec

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE **Date:** 03/21/2007

To: Tampa **Attn:** SSA [redacted]
Orlando RA

From: Miami
PB-2/PBCRA
Contact: SA [redacted]

Approved By [redacted]

Drafted By:

Case ID #: 31E-MM-108062 ~~(Pending)~~

Title: JEFFREY EPSTEIN;
[redacted]
WSTA - CHILD PROSTITUTION

(X) [redacted]

Synopsis: To request travel reference captioned matter.

Administrative: Reference telcall between SA [redacted] [redacted] and SSA [redacted] on 03/21/2007.

Details: On 07/24/2006 the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Palm Beach County Resident Agency (PBCRA), opened an investigation involving multi-millionaire Jeffrey Epstein and captioned subjects. The investigation involves numerous underage females who attended local high schools and were recruited for the purpose of engaging in sexual activity with Epstein. At the conclusion of the sexual activity, the minors were paid sums of money ranging from $200.00-$1,000.00.

FBI Miami, PBCRA, request travel concurrence with FBI Tampa, Orlando RA for the purpose of interviewing Victim/Witness [redacted] is currently residing in Orlando, Florida. SA's [redacted] and [redacted] [redacted] will travel on 03/22/2007 to interview [redacted]

31E-MM-108062-74

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

TAMPA

AT ORLANDO, FL

FBI Miami request travel concurrence from FBI Tampa to conduct victim/witness interview.

♦♦

FD-302 (Rev. 10-6-95)

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 01/23/2007

[redacted] was interviewed in the town of Palm Beach, Florida regarding a federal investigation involving the sexual exploitation of minors. After being advised of the identity of the interviewing agents and the nature of the interview, [redacted] provided the following information:

[redacted]

According to [redacted] [redacted] would either have to contact [redacted] LNU located out of the New York Office or speak with [redacted] regarding matters that concerned

Investigation on 01/18/2007 at Palm Beach, Florida

File # 31E-MM-108062 Date dictated 01/18/2007

by SA [redacted]
SA

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31E-MM-108062-75

[redacted]

[redacted] compared [redacted] with a female companion of EPSTEIN, [redacted] LNU. [redacted] thought [redacted], but [redacted] LNU, a [redacted] was more naive. [redacted] said that EPSTEIN was trying to make [redacted] LNU more sophisticated.

[redacted] stated that there were many females that would come to the residence. A lot of the females that traveled with EPSTEIN looked European or Foreign. [redacted] stated that the local girls who visited the residence appeared to be younger than those that EPSTEIN traveled with. [redacted] was not sure of the local girls' ages. When asked by the interviewing agent if they were under eighteen, [redacted] stated that [redacted] a girl at Royal Palm Beach High School and that some of the girls had car pooled together. The interviewing agent inquired of [redacted] if that meant he believed some of the girls were underage. [redacted]

[redacted] stated that EPSTEIN [redacted] for a local female, [redacted] was unable to remember her name. The Unidentified Female (UF) was appearing in a high school [redacted] Royal Palm Beach High School. [redacted] said that under EPSTEIN's instruction, [redacted] for the UF. He said it [redacted]

[redacted] stated that he recalled one female that traveled with EPSTEIN that looked very young. He believed her name was [redacted] LNU and that she was from California. [redacted] remembered her only staying at the residence on that one occasion. [redacted] LNU [redacted] was instructed by EPSTEIN to take [redacted] LNU to [redacted]

[redacted] said that EPSTEIN overall was a very private individual. [redacted] said that EPSTEIN would get massages everyday, sometimes morning and night. [redacted] was asked on [redacted]

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[redacted] specifically remembered paying a [redacted] LNU.

[redacted]

[redacted] did not witness any sexual activity between the females and EPSTEIN. When asked by the interviewing agent if [redacted] had ever [redacted] for EPSTEIN, [redacted] stated that he believed [redacted] but that he had not.

According to [redacted] other than receiving massages, EPSTEIN enjoyed getting ice cream from a local ice cream parlor with the girls. Under EPSTEIN's direction, [redacted] [redacted] would take the girls shopping. If EPSTEIN accompanied them he would stay in the vehicle. The girls would shop, find something they liked, place the items on hold, and later [redacted] purchase the items. [redacted] also had traveled to [redacted] [redacted] stated that on occasion, EPSTEIN would allow some of the girls to drive one of his vehicles.

[redacted] stated that he had taken messages from females calling regarding providing massages to EPSTEIN. He also stated that an older female possibly in her thirties, named [redacted] LNU, would call the residence. [redacted] EPSTEIN know that she had females for him. [redacted] could provide no other information about [redacted] LNU.

[redacted] said that [redacted] traveled to the residence with EPSTEIN on occasion. [redacted] believed [redacted] to be EPSTEIN's girlfriend, at first. However, when other females accompanied EPSTEIN, [redacted] residence. [redacted] said that he thought [redacted] also would try to find females for EPSTEIN. On one occasion, [redacted]

[redacted] said that the only male visitor he could recall accompanying EPSTEIN to the residence was [redacted] believed [redacted].

31E-MM-108062

Continuation of FD-302 of [redacted] , On 01/18/2007 , Page 4

[redacted] stated that he believed EPSTEIN wanted to be the center of attention with his female companions. [redacted] told the interviewing agents that [redacted] The females were laughing and appeared to be having a good time. EPSTEIN [redacted] asked the females to join him in [redacted] said that he believed EPSTEIN was jealous.

[redacted] also stated that he believed many of EPSTEIN's female companions were looking to make something of themselves and were seeking [redacted] stated that he believed, in reality, they were accomplishing nothing.

FD-302 (Rev. 10-6-95)

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 02/04/2007

[redacted] was interviewed in West Palm Beach, Florida regarding a federal investigation involving the sexual exploitation of minors. Also present during the interview was [redacted] and Assistant United States Attorney [redacted] of the UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE. After being advised of the identity of the interviewing agents and the nature of the interview, [redacted] provided the following information:

[redacted]

[redacted] EPSTEIN's Palm Beach residence. His responsibilities included [redacted]

According to [redacted] EPSTEIN traveled to Palm Beach via EPSTEIN's aircrafts, the Gulfstream or the Boeing 727. [redacted] was not aware of EPSTEIN ever flying a commercial airline to Palm Beach. EPSTEIN visited his residence in Palm Beach once, twice and sometimes even three times a month. EPSTEIN would stay for three or four days at a time. EPSTEIN traveled less to his Palm Beach residence in the summer months. EPSTEIN spent the most time at his Palm Beach and U.S. Virgin Islands residences. EPSTEIN has another residence in New Mexico and an apartment in Paris. [redacted] stated that EPSTEIN primarily traveled to Palm Beach [redacted] currently [redacted] said that [redacted] LNU. [redacted] said that [redacted] [redacted] and

Investigation on 02/02/2007 at West Palm Beach, Florida

File # 31E-MM-108062 Date dictated 02/02/2007

by SA [redacted]
SA

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31E-MM-108062-76

31E-MM-108062

Continuation of FD-302 of [redacted], On 02/02/2007, Page 2

[redacted] the main house. According to [redacted] the main house has six bedrooms and the Guest House has three bedrooms. Another individual that would come on a regular basis to the residence was [redacted] believed that [redacted] EPSTEIN would, on occasion, bring other guests with him when traveling to Palm Beach.

[redacted] The signatures on the account were EPSTEIN, [redacted]

[redacted] was aware that many females would come to EPSTEIN's residence to provide EPSTEIN with massages. [redacted] stated that EPSTEIN would receive one or two massages a day, sometimes even three. The massage times would be spread throughout the day. [redacted]

[redacted] said that none of the females providing EPSTEIN with a massage ever appeared upset.

[redacted] stated that he believed EPSTEIN [redacted] arranged EPSTEIN's appointments for massages with the females. [redacted] said some of the females who provided massages to EPSTEIN would leave messages. Messages were taken on message pads.

On one occasion, when EPSTEIN [redacted] asked [redacted] to [redacted]

[redacted] stated that EPSTEIN has a chiropractic table, as well as, a massage table. [redacted]

31E-MM-108062

Continuation of FD-302 of [redacted] , On 02/02/2007 , Page 3

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[redacted] said that [redacted] [redacted] According to [redacted] not like the way [redacted] conducted himself. [redacted] continued stating that [redacted] could not remember to finish one task if he were asked to complete another task at or during the same time.

[redacted]

Pursuant to a Grand Jury Subpoena, [redacted] supplied the interviewing agents with a copy of [redacted] Upon review of the report with [redacted] he provided the following information:

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[redacted]

31E-MM-108062

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Continuation of FD-302 of [redacted] , On 02/02/2007 , Page 4

[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted] the last time EPSTEIN was at the Palm Beach residence was prior to the execution of the State search warrant. [redacted] also said that approximately three weeks before the execution of the State search warrant [redacted] LNU came to the residence [redacted]

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 01/22/2007

[redacted] date of birth [redacted] Social Security Account Number (SSAN) [redacted] residing at [redacted] Palm Beach, Florida was contacted at his residence. After being advised of the identity of the interviewing agents and the nature of the interview, [redacted] provided the following information:

[redacted] was hired by Epstein through [redacted] primary responsibility [redacted]

[redacted] identified [redacted] LNU, and [redacted] LNU as [redacted] stated when a female guest arrived at the residence, [redacted] believed some of the girls were at the residence to provide Epstein with a massage. [redacted] remembered between 10-15 different local girls arriving at the residence. [redacted] recalled some girls were more frequent guests than others. [redacted] identified [redacted] LNU. The girls would stay at the residence between approximately 45-60 minutes. He recalled [redacted]

[redacted] contacted [redacted] telephone number [redacted] West Palm Beach, Florida.

Investigation on 01/11/2007 at Palm Beach, Florida

File # 31E-MM-108062 Date dictated

by SA [redacted] SA [redacted] SA [redacted]

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31E-MM-108062-77

FD-302a (Rev. 10-6-95)

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31E-MM-108062

Continuation of FD-302 of ______________________________ , On 01/11/2007 , Page 2

After a brief telephone conversation with [redacted] stated [redacted] would like to speak with one of the agents. SA [redacted] spoke briefly with [redacted] and explained the nature of visit. [redacted] agreed that [redacted] would voluntarily place the documents/reports in a sealed envelope and be escorted to [redacted] Voluntarily, [redacted] and the agents drove with the captioned records to [redacted] The envelope was hand delivered by [redacted] for the purpose of preserving the records.

FD-350 (Rev. 5-8-81)

Mount Clipping in Space Below)

(Indicate page, name of
newspaper, city and state.)
1B / 8B / The Palm Beach Post
West Palm Beach, FL
Date: 3/13/2007

Delays in Epstein case unusual, lawyers say

Character
or
Classification: 31E-MM-108062
Submitting Office: MM

Indexing: 3/14/07

Delays in Epstein case unusual, lawyers say

A federal probe or a plea deal could explain the wait in the Palm Beacher's solicitation case.

By LARRY KELLER
Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

Nearly eight months after Palm Beach tycoon Jeffrey Epstein was charged with felony solicitation of prostitution, there has been no discernible progress in his case. No witnesses deposed. No trial date set. Nothing, save for routine court hearings reset without explanation.

"Usually that would be unusual," said criminal defense attorney Glenn Mitchell, who has no involvement in the case.

"As a general rule, it would be unusual for nothing to have happened," agreed Michael Dutko, a criminal defense attorney in Fort Lauderdale. He represents Haley Robson, 20, of Royal Palm Beach, potentially a key witness in the case.

A routine hearing for Epstein was pulled from the court docket last week and reset for May 16. The delays and inaction could be due to a potential federal probe of Epstein or because a plea deal is in the works, attorneys say.

Unusual is the word that best describes everything about the case against Epstein, 54, an enigmatic money manager in New York City who counts Bill Clinton

See EPSTEIN, 8B ▶

Epstein
Money manager in New York has powerful allies.

FBI: 'We still have a pending case'

▶ EPSTEIN *from 1B*

and Donald Trump among his friends.

"Highly unusual" is how Palm Beach Police Chief Michael Reiter described State Attorney Barry Krischer's handling of the case in a bluntly critical letter to Krischer last year before Epstein was indicted.

Reiter referred the matter to the FBI to determine whether any federal laws had been violated. Epstein's allies countered by attacking the chief personally and professionally.

Reiter's department investigated Epstein for 11 months. Police sifted repeatedly through his trash and conducted surveillance on his five-bedroom, 7½-bath, 7,234-square-foot home on the Intracoastal Waterway.

Police said Epstein paid women and girls as young as 14 to give him erotic massages at his home. Police thought there was probable cause to charge him with unlawful sex acts with a minor and lewd and lascivious molestation.

Epstein responded by hiring a phalanx of lawyers. One of them, Harvard law professor and author Alan Dershowitz, provided the state attorney's office with information about alcohol and marijuana use by some of the girls who said they were with Epstein.

Prosecutors then referred the case to the grand jury rather than file charges directly against Epstein.

Teenage girls were recruited to visit Epstein for massages and sex, police say.

Epstein's attorneys deny he had sex with underage girls. The lawyers say the girls' stories are not credible. But if the court file is any indicator, they've made no effort to depose the girls.

Neither prosecutors nor defense attorneys have sought to question Robson, said Dutko, her attorney. She recruited teenage girls to visit Epstein for massages and sexual activity, Palm Beach police said, and presumably would be a key witness.

Epstein's attorney Jack Goldberger did not return phone messages.

A source close to the case suggested it is languishing pending a decision by the FBI on whether to refer it to federal prosecutors.

"We still have a pending case," FBI spokeswoman Judy Orihuela said Monday.

State Attorney Krischer did not return a call for comment. His spokesman, Mike Edmondson, declined to say whether federal investigators are delaying the Epstein case. But, he added, "if another agency is looking at something, we wouldn't want to step on their toes."

Attorneys say inertia in a criminal case often points to a pending plea deal.

"It would not surprise me if something has happened that's not reflected in the court file," said Dutko, such as an agreement that will be formalized later.

Defense attorney Marc Shiner said defense attorneys sometimes put off overtly conducting discovery — deposing witnesses, requesting documents and the like — because doing so creates more work for harried prosecutors who may become angry and not offer a plea deal.

"Sometimes defense lawyers, knowing that, will try and do discovery without taking depositions," said Shiner, a former prosecutor for 13 years.

Instead, they may conduct a below-the-radar probe such as having a private investigator check out leads, he said.

Shiner and others say a plea deal for Epstein probably would result in pretrial intervention, in which a defendant may be ordered to undergo a psychological evaluation, counseling or other conditions in return for dropping the charge.

Edmondson, spokesman for State Attorney Krischer, said there is no plea offer and no request for the prosecution to show its cards.

"To my knowledge, it's never happened before on a filed case," he said.

@ larry_keller@pbpost.com

31E-MM-108062-78

(Rev. 01-31-2003)

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE
Date: 03/13/2007

To: Miami
Attn: SSRA [redacted]

From: Miami
Palm Beach County RA/PB-2
Contact: SA [redacted]

[redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By:

Case ID #: 31E-MM-108062 ~~(Pending)~~

Title: JEFFREY EPSTEIN;
[redacted]
WSTA - CHILD PROSTITUTION

Synopsis: To request assignment of co-case agent.

Details: It is requested that SA [redacted] be assigned as co-case agent to above captioned case.

♦♦

Assign SA [redacted]
as co-case Agent

[redacted]

072[redacted]01.ec
31E-MM-108062-81

(Rev. 01-31-2003)

[redacted] ~~115 a.ec~~
115 [redacted] 1,EC

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE Date: 04/20/2007

To: Criminal Investigative Attn: Crimes Against Children Unit
UC [redacted]
IA

From: Miami
PB-2/PBCRA
Contact: SA [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By:

Case ID #: 31E-MM-108062 ~~(Pending)~~

Title: JEFFREY EPSTEIN;
[redacted]
WSTA - CHILD PROSTITUTION

Synopsis: To request Intelligence Analyst (IA) [redacted] travel to Palm Beach RA to assist with analysis for captioned case.

Details: On 07/24/2006 the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Palm Beach County Resident Agency (PBCRA), opened an investigation involving billionaire Jeffrey Epstein and captioned subjects. The investigation involves numerous underage females who attended local high schools and were recruited for the purpose of engaging in sexual activity with Epstein. At the conclusion of the sexual activity, the minors were paid sums of money ranging from $200.00 - $1,000.00.

FBI Miami, PBCRA, requests the travel of IA [redacted] [redacted] Crimes Against Children Unit (CACU), for the purpose of assisting with telephone analysis for captioned case.

31E-MM-108062-84

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LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Action)

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIVE

AT WASHINGTON, DC

Approve the travel of IA [redacted] to Miami - Palm Beach County RA to assist with analysis for captioned case in anticipation of an indictment on 05/15/2007

♦♦

(Rev. 01-31-2003)

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE **Date:** 05/02/2007

To: Criminal Investigative **Attn:** Gang/Criminal Enterprise Section
SC Alex Juan Turner
ASC [redacted]
UC
SSA

[redacted]

From: Miami
PB-2/PBCRA
Contact: SA [redacted]

Approved By [redacted]

Drafted By:

Case ID #: 31E-MM-108062 ~~(Pending)~~

Title: JEFFREY EPSTEIN;
[redacted]
WSTA - CHILD PROSTITUTION

Synopsis: To request Supervisory Special Agent (SSA) [redacted] [redacted] travel to Palm Beach RA for the purpose of assisting with indictment preparation, document preparation, chart finalization and to provide testimony at detention hearing.

Details: On 07/24/2006, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Palm Beach County Resident Agency (PBCRA), opened an investigation involving billionaire Jeffrey Epstein and captioned subjects. The investigation involves numerous underage females who attended local high schools and were recruited for the purpose of engaging in sexual activity with Epstein. At the conclusion of the sexual activity, the minors were paid sums of money ranging from $200.00 - $1,000.00.

FBI Miami, PBCRA, is anticipating an upcoming indictment and arrests of captioned subjects. The USAO and FBI Miami, PBCRA, request the travel of former co-case agent SSA [redacted] Gang/Criminal Enterprise Section, from 05/09/2007 to 05/18/2007, for the purpose of assisting with indictment preparation, document preparation, chart finalization and to provide testimony at detention hearing.

122 [redacted] 01-EC

31E-MM-108062-82

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LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Action)

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIVE

AT WASHINGTON, DC

Approval request for the travel of SSA [redacted] [redacted] to Miami Division, PBCRA from 05/09/2007 to 05/18/2007 for the purpose of assisting with indictment preparation, document preparation, chart finalization and to provide testimony at detention hearing.

♦♦

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(Rev. 01-31-2003)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE **Date:** 05/17/2007

To: Tampa **Attn:** SSA [redacted]
Orlando RA

From: Miami
PB-2/PBCRA
Contact: SA [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By:

Case ID #: ~~31E~~-MM-108062 ~~(Pending)~~

Title: JEFFREY EPSTEIN;
[redacted]
WSTA - CHILD PROSTITUTION

(X)
[redacted]

Synopsis: To request travel reference captioned matter.

Administrative: Reference telcall between SA [redacted] [redacted] and Primary Relief Supervisor [redacted] on 05/17/2007.

Details: On 07/24/2006 the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Palm Beach County Resident Agency (PBCRA), opened an investigation involving multi-millionaire Jeffrey Epstein and captioned subjects. The investigation involves numerous underage females who attended local high schools and were recruited for the purpose of engaging in sexual activity with Epstein. At the conclusion of the sexual activity, the minors were paid sums of money ranging from $200.00-$1,000.00

FBI Miami, PBCRA, request travel concurrence with FBI Tampa, Orlando RA for the purpose of interviewing a Victim/Witness. SA's [redacted] and [redacted] [redacted] will travel on 05/18/2007 to interview the Victim/Witness.

138[redacted]61.EC

31E-MM-108062-88

To: Tampa From: [illegible]ami
Re: 31E-MM-108062, 05/17/2007

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

TAMPA

AT ORLANDO, FL

FBI Miami requests travel concurrence from FBI Tampa to conduct victim/witness interview.

◆◆

Automated Serial Permanent Charge-Out
FD-5a (1-5-94)

Date: 02/14/08 Time: 13:28

Case ID: 31E-MM-108062 Serial: 89

Description of Document:

Type : OTHER
Date : 08/02/06
To : [redacted]
From : US DIST COURT
Topic: SUBPOENA TO TESTIFY BEFORE GRAND JURY

b3

Reason for Permanent Charge-Out:

serialized in the wrong file

Transferred to:

Case ID: 31E-MM-108062-GJ Serial: 39

Employee: [redacted]

b6
b7C

31E-MM-108062-89

b6
b7C

[redacted]

Pursuant to a federal investigation regarding the sexual exploitation of minors, [redacted] was interviewed by the FBI. [redacted] identifying information is recorded below:

Name: [redacted]

Race: White

Sex: Female

DOB: [redacted]

Home Address:

Cellular Telephone:

Work:

116[redacted]02.ins

31E-MM-108062-91

101[redacted]01.ec

b6
b7C

31E-MM-108062
[redacted]

1

Pursuant to a federal investigation regarding the sexual exploitation of minors, [redacted] was interviewed by the FBI. [redacted]

[redacted]

identifying information is recorded below:

Name:	[redacted]
Race:	White
Sex:	[redacted]
DOB:	[redacted]
SSAN:	[redacted]
Home Address:	[redacted]
Cellular Telephone:	[redacted]
Parents:	[redacted]

X
[redacted]

31E-MM-108062-92

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31E-MM-108062
[redacted]

1

Pursuant to a federal investigation regarding the sexual exploitation of minors, [redacted] was interviewed by the FBI. [redacted]

31E-MM-108062-95

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31E-MM-108062
[redacted]

1

On 05/25/2007, SSA [redacted] FBI liaison at the Department of Justice, Office of International Affairs, provided a document listing nations that currently have extradition treaties with the United States. A copy of the list is attached to, and becomes part of, this document.

31E-MM-108062-96

UNITED STATES EXTRADITION TREATIES

(January 1, 2006)

Stewart C. Robinson
Deputy Director
Office of International Affairs
United States Department of Justice

International extradition is the formal process by which a person found in one country is surrendered to another country for trial or punishment. The process is regulated by treaty and conducted between the Federal Government of the United States and the government of a foreign country. It differs considerably from interstate rendition, commonly referred to as "interstate extradition", mandated by the Constitution, Art. 4, Sec. 2.

Below is a listing of extradition treaties signed by the United States. As indicated, not all of the treaties have entered into force as of the date this document was created.
Please contact the Office of International Affairs, United States Department of Justice at (202) 514-0000 to determine the status of a particular treaty.

Over the last few years, the United States has focused its efforts on replacing extradition treaties that have become outdated and obsolete, as well negotiating treaties with first time treaty partners. Our most recent treaties include the "dual criminality" approach rather than a listing of offenses for which extradition may be sought, clarify the procedures for provisional arrest, permit extradition whether the extraditable offense occurred before or after the treaty enters into force, allow the person sought to waive extradition, and permit temporary transfer of a fugitive serving a sentence in one state in order to expedite prosecution in another. In our newer treaties, one of the priorities of the United States has been to address two extremely difficult problems: the extradition of nationals; and extradition where the fugitive may be subject to the death penalty in the Requesting state. Not all of our treaty partners have agreed to extradite under these circumstances, but the issue is specifically addressed.

The treaties **highlighted "pending" in boldface**, are treaties which have not entered into force as of the date of this listing. The law of extradition varies from country to country and is subject to foreign policy considerations. The first step a prosecutor should take before considering any action relating to international extradition, is to contact the Office of International Affairs, United States Department of Justice, at (202) 514-0000.

UNITED STATES EXTRADITION TREATIES

January 1, 2006

Extradition Treaty with:	Signed:	Entered into Force:	Citation (if any):
Albania	March 1, 1933	November 14, 1935	49 Stat. 3133
Anguilla *	June 8, 1972	January 21, 1977	
Antigua-Barbuda	June 3, 1996	July 1, 1999	
Argentina	June 10, 1997	June 14, 2000	
Australia	May 14, 1974	May 8, 1976	27 UST 957
Australia Protocol	September 4, 1990	December 21, 1992	
Austria	January 8, 1998	January 1, 2000	
Bahamas	March 9, 1990	September 22, 1994	
Barbados	February 28, 1996	March 3, 2000	
Belgium	April 27, 1987	September 1, 1997	
Belgium Protocol	**March 17, 1987**	**Pending**	
Belize	March 30, 2000	March 27, 2001	
Bermuda *	June 8, 1972	January 21, 1997	
Bolivia	June 27, 1995	November 21, 1996	
Bosnia Herzegovina **	October 25, 1901	June 12, 1902	
Brazil	January 13, 1961	December 17, 1964	15 UST 2093
Brazil	June 18, 1962	December 17, 1964	15 UST 2112
British Indian Ocean Territory *	June 8, 1972	January 21, 1977	
British Virgin Islands *	June 8, 1972	January 21, 1977	
Bulgaria	March 19, 1924	June 24, 1924	43 Stat. 1886
Bulgaria	June 8, 1934	August 15, 1935	49 Stat. 3250
Burma	December 22, 1931	November 1, 1941	47 Stat. 2122
Canada	December 3, 1971	March 22, 1976	27 UST 983
Canada	June 28, 1974	March 22, 1976	27 UST 1017
Canada Extradition Protocol	January 11, 1988	November 26, 1991	
Canada Extradition Protocol	January 12, 2001	April 30, 2003	
Cayman Islands *	June 8, 1972	January 21, 1977	
Chile	April 17, 1900	June 26, 1902	32 Stat. 1850
Colombia +	September 14, 1979	March 4, 1982	
Congo	January 6, 1909	July 27, 1911	37 Stat. 1526
Congo	January 15, 1929	May 19, 1929	46 Stat. 2276
Congo	April 23, 1936	September 24, 1936	50 Stat. 1117
Congo		August 5, 1961	13 UST 2065
Costa Rica	December 4, 1982	October 11, 1991	
Croatia **	October 25, 1901	June 12, 1902	
Cuba	April 6, 1904	March 2, 1905	33 Stat. 2265
Cuba	December 6, 1904	March 2, 1905	33 Stat. 2273
Cuba	January 14, 1926	June 18, 1926	44 Stat. 2392
Cyprus	June 17, 1996	September 14, 1999	
Czech Republic	July 2, 1925	March 29, 1926	44 Stat. 2367
Czech Republic	April 29, 1935	August 28, 1935	49 Stat. 3253
Denmark	June 22, 1972	July 31, 1974	25 UST 1293
Dominica	October 10, 1996	May 25, 2000	
Dominican Republic	June 19, 1909	August 2, 1910	36 Stat. 2468
Ecuador	June 28, 1872	November 12, 1873	18 Stat. 199
Ecuador Supplementary	September 22, 1939	May 29, 1941	
Egypt	August 11, 1874	April 22, 1875	19 Stat. 572

Extradition Treaty with:	Signed:	Entered into Force:	Citation (if any):
El Salvador	April 18, 1911	July 10, 1911	37 Stat. 1516
Estonia	November 8, 1923	November 15, 1924	43 Stat. 1849
Estonia	October 10, 1934	May 7, 1935	49 Stat. 3190
European Union	**June 25, 2003**	**Pending**	
Fiji	December 22, 1931	June 24, 1935	47 Stat. 2122
Finland	June 11, 1976	May 11, 1980	31 UST 944
France	April 15, 1996	February 1, 2002	
France	January 6, 1909	July 27, 1911	37 Stat. 1526
France	February 12, 1970	April 3, 1971	22 UST 407
Gambia	December 22, 1931	June 24, 1935	47 Stat. 2122
Germany	June 20, 1978	August 29, 1980	32 UST 1485
Germany Protocol	October 21, 1986	March 11, 1993	
Ghana	December 22, 1931	June 24, 1935	47 Stat. 2122
Greece	May 6, 1931	November 1, 1932	47 Stat. 2185
Greece	September 2, 1937	September 2, 1937	51 Stat. 357
Grenada	May 31, 1996	Sept. 14, 1999	
Guatemala	February 27, 1903	August 15, 1903	33 Stat. 2147
Guatemala	February 20, 1940	March 13, 1941	55 Stat. 1097
Guyana	December 22, 1931	June 24, 1935	47 Stat. 2122
Haiti	August 9, 1904	June 28, 1905	34 Stat. 2858
Honduras	January 15, 1909	July 10, 1912	37 Stat. 1616
Honduras	February 21, 1927	June 5, 1928	45 Stat. 2489
Hong Kong	December 20, 1996	January 21, 1998	
Hungary	December 1, 1994	March 18, 1997	
Iceland	January 6, 1902	May 16, 1902	32 Stat. 1096
Iceland	November 6, 1905	February 19, 1906	34 Stat. 2887
India	June 25, 1997	July 21, 1999	
Iraq	June 7, 1934	April 23, 1936	49 Stat. 3380
Ireland	July 13, 1983	December 15, 1984	
Israel	December 10, 1962	December 5, 1963	14 UST 1707
Italy	October 13, 1983	September 24, 1984	TIAS 10837
Jamaica	June 14, 1983	July 7, 1991	
Japan	March 3, 1978	March 26, 1980	31 UST 892
Jordan	March 28, 1995	July 29, 1995	
Kenya	December 22, 1931	June 24, 1935	47 Stat. 2122
Kenya		August 19, 1965	16 UST 1866
Kiribati *	June 8, 1972	January 21, 1977	28 UST 227
Latvia	October 16, 1923	March 1, 1924	43 Stat. 1783
Latvia	October 10, 1934	March 29, 1935	49 Stat. 3131
Lesotho	December 22, 1931	June 24, 1935	47 Stat. 2122
Liberia	November 1, 1937	November 21, 1939	54 Stat. 1733
Liechtenstein	May 20, 1936	June 28, 1937	50 Stat. 1337
Lithuania	April 9, 1924	August 23, 1924	43 Stat. 1835
Lithuania	May 17, 1934	January 8, 1935	49 Stat. 3077
Lithuania	October 23, 2001	March 31, 2003	
Luxembourg	October 1, 1996	February 2, 2002	
Luxembourg	April 24, 1935	March 3, 1936	49 Stat. 3355
Luxembourg	October 29, 1883	August 13, 1884	23 Stat. 808
Malawi	December 22, 1931	June 24, 1935	47 Stat. 2122
Malawi		April 4, 1967	18 UST 1822
Malaysia	August 3, 1995	June 2, 1997	
Malta	December 22, 1931	June 24, 1935	47 Stat. 2122

Extradition Treaty with:	**Signed:**	**Entered into Force:**	**Citation (if any):**
Mauritius	December 22, 1931	June 24, 1935	47 Stat. 2122
Mexico	May 4, 1978	January 25, 1980	31 UST 5059
Mexico Protocol	November 13, 1997	May 21, 2001	
Monaco	February 15, 1939	March 28, 1940	54 Stat. 1780
Montserrat *	June 8, 1972	January 21, 1977	
Nauru	December 22, 1931	June 24, 1935	47 Stat. 2122
Netherlands	June 24, 1980	September 15, 1983	TIAS 10733
New Zealand	January 12, 1970	December 8, 1970	22 UST 1
Nicaragua	March 1, 1905	July 14, 1907	35 Stat. 1869
Nigeria	December 22, 1931	June 24, 1935	47 Stat. 2122
Norway	June 9, 1977	March 7, 1980	31 UST 5619
Pakistan	December 22, 1931	March 9, 1942	47 Stat. 2122
Panama	May 25, 1904	May 8, 1905	34 Stat. 2851
Papua New Guinea	December 22, 1931	August 30, 1935	47 Stat. 2122
Papua New Guinea	Feb. 2, 23,1988	Feb. 23, 1988	
Paraguay	November 9, 1998	March 9, 2001	
Peru	November 28, 1899	February 23, 1901	31 Stat. 1921
Peru	July 26, 2001	August 25, 2003	
Philippines	November 13, 1994	November 22, 1996	
Poland	July 10, 1996	September 17, 1999	
Portugal	May 7, 1908	November 14, 1908	35 Stat. 2071
Romania	July 23, 1924	April 7, 1925	44 Stat. 202
Romania	November 10, 1936	July 27, 1937	50 Stat. 1349
San Marino	January 10, 1906	July 8, 1908	35 Stat. 1971
San Marino	October 10, 1934	June 28, 1935	49 Stat. 3198
Seychelles	December 22, 1931	June 24, 1935	47 Stat. 2122
Sierra Leone	December 22, 1931	June 24, 1935	47 Stat. 2122
Singapore	December 22, 1931	June 24, 1935	47 Stat. 2122
Singapore		June 10, 1969	20 UST 2764
Slovak Republic	July 2, 1925	March 29, 1926	44 Stat. 2367
Slovak Republic	April 29, 1935	August 28, 1935	49 Stat. 3253
Slovenia **	October 25, 1901	June 12, 1902	
Solomon Islands	June 8, 1972	January 21, 1977	28 UST 227
South Africa	December 18, 1947	April 30, 1950	2 UST 884
South Africa	September 16, 1999	June 25, 2001	
South Korea	June 9, 1998	December 21, 1999	
Spain 3rd Supplementary	March 12, 1996	July 25, 1999	
Spain 2nd Supplementary	February 9, 1988	July 2, 1993	
Spain Supplementary	January 25, 1975	June 2, 1978	29 UST 2283
Spain	May 29, 1970	June 16, 1971	22 UST 737
Sri Lanka	September 30, 1999	January 12, 2001	
St. Christopher - Nevis	September 18, 1996	February 23, 2000	
St. Lucia	April 18, 1996	February 2, 2000	
St. Vincent-Grenadines	August 15, 1996	September 8, 1999	
Suriname	January 18, 1904	August 28, 1904	33 Stat. 2257
Suriname	June 2, 1887	July 11, 1889	26 Stat. 1481
Swaziland	December 22, 1931	June 24, 1935	47 Stat. 2122
Sweden	October 24, 1961	December 3, 1963	14 UST 1845
Sweden	March 14, 1983	September 24, 1984	TIAS 10812
Switzerland	November 14, 1990	September 10, 1997	
Tanzania	December 22, 1931	June 24, 1935	47 Stat. 2122
		Dec. 6, 1965	16 UST 2066
Thailand	December 14, 1983	May 17, 1991	

Extradition Treaty with:	Signed:	Entered into Force:	Citation (if any):
Tonga	December 22, 1931	June 24, 1935	47 Stat. 2122
Tonga		September 13, 1977	28 UST 5290
Trinidad-Tobago	March 6, 1996	Nov. 3, 1999	
Turkey	June 7, 1979	January 1, 1981	32 UST 3111
Tuvalu	June 8, 1972	January 21, 1977	28 UST 227
Tuvalu		April 25, 1980	32 UST 1310
United Kingdom	June 8, 1972	January 21, 1977	28 UST 227
United Kingdom Protocol	June 25, 1985	December 23, 1986	
United Kingdom	**March 31, 2003**	**Pending**	
Uruguay	April 6, 1973	April 11, 1984	TIAS 10850
Venezuela	January 19, 1922	April 14, 1923	43 Stat. 1698
Yugoslavia	October 25, 1901	June 12, 1902	32 Stat. 1890
Zambia	December 22, 1931	June 24, 1935	47 Stat. 2122
Zimbabwe	July 25, 1997	April 26, 2000	

* Under Treaty with United Kingdom.

** Under Treaty with Yugoslavia which entered into force in 1902.

+ Considered a Treaty in Force by U.S., but not by Colombia

(Rev. 01-31-2003)

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE **Date:** 06/11/2007

To: Tampa **Attn:** SSA [redacted]
Orlando RA

From: Miami
PB-2/PBCRA
Contact: SA [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By:

Case ID #: ~~31~~E-MM-108062 ~~(Pending)~~

Title: JEFFREY EPSTEIN;
[redacted]
WSTA - CHILD PROSTITUTION

[redacted]

Synopsis: To request travel reference captioned matter.

Administrative: Reference telcall between SA [redacted] and SSA [redacted] on 06/12/2007.

Details: On 07/24/2006 the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Palm Beach County Resident Agency (PBCRA), opened an investigation involving multi-millionaire Jeffrey Epstein and captioned subjects. The investigation involves numerous underage females who attended local high schools and were recruited for the purpose of engaging in sexual activity with Epstein. At the conclusion of the sexual activity, the minors were paid sums of money ranging from $200.00-$1,000.00

FBI Miami, PBCRA, requests travel concurrence with FBI Tampa, Orlando RA for the purpose of interviewing a Victim/Witness. SA's [redacted] and [redacted] will travel on 06/12/2007 to interview the Victim/Witness.

31E-MM-108062-97

To: Tampa From: Miami
Re: 31E-MM-108062, 06/11/2007

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

TAMPA

AT ORLANDO, FL

FBI Miami requests travel concurrence from FBI Tampa to conduct victim/witness interview.

♦♦

(Rev. 01-31-2003)

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE **Date:** 06/22/2007

To: Miami **Attn:** IMA/PB2

O [redacted]

From: Miami
PB2/PBCRA
Contact: SA [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By:

Case ID #: 31E-MM-108062 ~~(Pending)~~

Title: ✓JEFFREY EPSTEIN;
[redacted]
WSTA - CHILD PROSTITUTION

Synopsis: To request the opening of sub-files in captioned case.

Details: It is requested that the following sub-files be opened to assist in document management in captioned case.

SUB - GJ Federal Grand Jury

✓ [redacted]

Open Sub file

[redacted]

♦♦

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31E-MM-108062-98

(Rev. 01-31-2003)

229[redacted]01.ec

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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Precedence: ROUTINE **Date:** 08/17/2007

To: New York **Attn:** SSA [redacted]

From: Miami
PB-2/PBCRA
Contact: SA [redacted]

Approved By: [redacted]

Drafted By:

Case ID #: ~~31E-~~MM-108062 ~~(Pending)~~

Title: JEFFREY EPSTEIN;
[redacted]
WSTA - CHILD PROSTITUTION

Synopsis: To request travel reference captioned matter.

[redacted]

Administrative: Reference telcall between SA [redacted] [redacted] and SA [redacted] on 08/15/2007.

Details: On 07/24/2006 the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Palm Beach County Resident Agency (PBCRA), opened an investigation involving multi-millionaire Jeffrey Epstein and captioned subjects. The investigation involves numerous underage females who attended local high schools and were recruited for the purpose of engaging in sexual activity with Epstein. At the conclusion of the sexual activity, the minors were paid sums of money ranging from $200.00-$1,000.00

FBI Miami, PBCRA, requests travel concurrence with FBI New York for the purpose of interviewing witnesses and serving target letters on two subjects. SA's [redacted] and [redacted] will travel to New York from 08/20/2007 to 08/24/2007. No assistance from FBI New York is anticipated at this time.

31E-MM-108062-99

To: New York From: Miami
Re: 31E-MM-108062, 08/17/2007

LEAD(s):

Set Lead 1: (Info)

TAMPA

AT NEW YORK, NY

FBI Miami requests travel concurrence from FBI New York to conduct witness interviews and serve target letters on subjects.

♦♦